

Q4

OCT-DEC 2026

THE VILLAGE DRUM

FALL 2026



Office of Black Catholic Ministries
Sr. Jane Nesmith, SBS, Director



Catholic Diocese
of Cleveland



@BlkCatholicsCLE

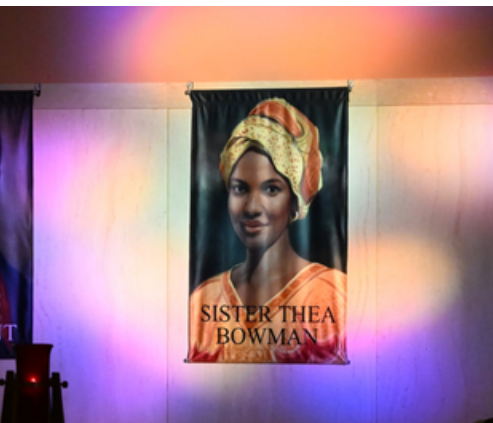
A SIGN IN THE SANCTUARY

BY FR. DAVID DOMANSKI, OFM, CAP., PASTOR OF HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

On Friday, August 28, 2026, Holy Spirit Parish in the Diocese of Cleveland hosted its first combined ecumenical choir with neighboring Black churches from several Christian denominations. More than 120 individuals—including pastors and members of predominantly Black Christian communities—gathered for “131 Praise and Worship,” an evening of song, prayer, and fellowship. Renata Napier of the Apostolic Church of God in Christ led worship, and the Rev. Demetrius Booker, retired Ohio State Pastor of the Church of God, preached an inspiring message on Christian unity and service. Guided by Jesus’ prayer “that they may be one” (John 17:21–22), the event offered a powerful witness to Christian unity. Holy Spirit’s music director, Lisa Cameron, who comes from a Pentecostal tradition, fulfilled a long-held dream of conducting an ecumenical choir.

During the singing of “Let’s Have Church” by The Choir Room, light from the rose window at the back of the church shone directly on the image of Servant of God Sr. Thea Bowman in the sanctuary. Many witnessed the moment, including Sylvia Little Harris, who helped establish the Thea Bowman Center in 2001. Sylvia reflected, “The light shining around Sister Thea’s picture is a sign that she was present with us at Holy Spirit tonight—that’s her halo. Sister Thea loved that Old Time Religion and gospel music. And didn’t we have both!” The community received this grace-filled moment as a sign of the Holy Spirit’s encouragement in the shared work of building Christian unity and peace across denominations.

Servant of God, Sister Thea Bowman, pray for us!



OCTOBER

Every Saturday 2-4 pm
Line Dancing Lessons
St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima
Church, Cleveland

October 4, 12:15-1:15pm
Racial Equity Task Force
Immigration Workshop
St. Dominic Church, Shaker
Heights

October 8-11, 2026
Homecoming Events
St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima
Church, Cleveland
Call parish office for details,
216-391-1655

October 18, 11am
Thomas/Clark Scholarship Award
St. Adalbert/Our Lady of the
Blessed Sacrament Church,
Cleveland
Following the 11 am liturgy

October 25, 10:30am
Installation of Fr. Paul Dressler
St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima
Church, Cleveland
Presider: Bishop Martin Amos

October 31, 9:30am-1:00pm
Operation Good News Prayer
Breakfast
Presenter: Robert Gutherman
Cost: \$20; No sales at the door



PRAYER WARRIORS' RETREAT

BY LIZANN HUDSON, ST. ALOYSIUS/ST. AGATHA PARISH

On Saturday, September 19, 2026, the Women of Prayer: Prayer Warriors hosted their second annual retreat at Our Lady of Peace School Hall. Sixty women gathered for a day of prayer, reflection, and fellowship. Following the opening prayer, members of the prayer group shared their mission statement.

Claudia Boden delivered a powerful message on the theme "We Don't Know How and We Don't Know When God's Gonna Do It. All We Know is We Have the Victory." A dynamic workshop followed entitled "God's Mercies."

The retreat concluded with the creation of vision fans, a creative activity that allowed the participants to depict how they would like to see their future spiritual and physical endeavors. Participants shared that they left the retreat feeling uplifted, renewed, and filled with hope. Many are already looking forward to next year's retreat.

FIRST-YEAR ASPIRANT TO THE DIACONATE

BY SR. JANE NESMITH, SBS

Dwayne Redrick and his wife, Alexis Rae, of St. John Vianney Parish are excited to begin a new chapter in their faith journey as Dwayne enters the Diocese of Cleveland's Diaconate Formation Program. Supported by their pastor, Fr. Thomas Johns, Dwayne is one of fourteen first-year aspirants in this year's class. Dwayne and Alexis Rae have been married for four years of their six-year friendship. Together they are raising three young children, Nolan, Valentina, and Gabriel, all under the age of three.

Throughout his life, many people told Dwayne that he would become a priest or pastor. Two years ago, however, his mother-in-law looked at him and said, "You are going to become a deacon." Although Dwayne has always been on fire for Christ, he officially entered the Church in 2023. Grateful for Alexis Rae's support, he is ready to begin his "Yes, Lord" journey. His priorities, in order, are God, his wife, his children, family, friends, work, football, and fun.

Dwayne, and Alexis Rae, know that our prayers are with you all the way! Congratulations!





ANNUAL ST. PETER CLAVER DAY

BY GRAND LADY JUDITH MARTIN, HOLY SPIRIT CHURCH

St. Peter Claver Day is traditionally celebrated by the Knights and Ladies Auxiliary of Peter Claver on the Sunday closest to the Feast Day of St. Peter Claver. Each year, it rotates among the African American parishes.

This year the Mass was celebrated on Sunday September 6, 2026, at St. Adalbert/Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church in Cleveland. The celebrant, Knight Fr. Gary Chuma, delivered a profound and inspiring homily focused on the attributes to which our esteemed organization is committed: spreading faith, hope, and love through friendship, unity, and Christian charity.

The liturgy was enriched by a collaborative choir composed of parishioners, the Evangelizing Sisters of Mary, and Sr. Jane Nesmith, SBS. Musical accompaniment was provided by Mrs. Bumpers on keyboard and Dennis Muyego on African drums. Following the Mass, we were grateful to continue the celebration with fellowship and delicious soul food.

Those interested in learning more about the Knights of Peter Claver and Ladies Auxiliary, or in becoming a member, please contact:

- Grand Knight Victor McDowell, (216) 548-1300
- Grand Lady Judith Martin, (216) 253-0955

For additional information, visit kofpc.org. All are welcome!

FOUR YOUNG ADULTS TO ATTEND WORLD YOUTH DAY 2027

BY SR. JANE NESMITH, SBS

Four young adults from the African American Catholic community are registered to attend World Youth Day 2027, which will be held in Seoul, South Korea, from August 3–10. The travelers will begin their pilgrimage on August 1, 2027. Fredrick Brown and Dejonae Shaw will represent St. Aloysius/St. Agatha Church; Erin Whatley Baker will represent Holy Spirit Church; and Eric Smedley will represent St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Church. All attendees are active participants in their parish community. I am looking forward to accompanying them with other pilgrims from the Diocese of Cleveland under the leadership of Megan Bolin, Director of the Office of Young Adult Ministries.

NOVEMBER

Black Catholic History Month

Rosary and Adoration Series

November 2, 6:30pm

St. Adalbert/Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church, Cleveland

November 12, 6:30pm

St. Aloysius/St. Agatha Church, Cleveland

November 18, 6:30pm

St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Church, Cleveland

November 24, 6:30pm

Holy Spirit Church, Garfield Heights

DECEMBER

December 18, 6-8pm

Live-Nativity of Jesus Christ
St. Aloysius/St. Agatha Church, Cleveland



Take courage! I have overcome the world.

Jn 16:33

WHEN MINISTRY BECOMES TEAMWORK

BY ANDREW & TERRI LYKE

We had grown accustomed to a scarcity of invitations for our marriage ministry. Health challenges over the past decade forced us to step away from leading our Arusi Retreat ministry. Although Andrew's leukemia is now behind us and his health restored, we wondered whether our decades-long work supporting marriages, especially among African American Catholics, had reached its conclusion.

Then Sister Jane invited us to return to St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Church in Cleveland for a marriage conference on September 26, 2026. While we no longer had the energy to lead a full weekend retreat, we were honored to serve as keynote presenters and consultants to the planning team. The invitation opened the door to a new and deeply fulfilling way of ministering.

From the outset, Mrs. Rhonda Cross Magnum, the St. Agnes/Our Lady of Fatima Collaborative Marriage Ministry, and the Diocese of Cleveland Office of Black Catholic Ministries understood that a successful conference required shared ownership and collaboration. Team members contributed their gifts generously, listened respectfully, and remained focused on the spiritual purpose of the gathering. Our role was not to direct but to accompany and support the team's vision. The team included Holy Spirit, St. Aloysius/St. Agatha, and St. Adalbert/Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.

Throughout the planning process, responsibilities were shared, challenges were met with creativity, and the presence of the Holy Spirit was evident. By the time the conference began, it clearly reflected the efforts of many dedicated people working together in faith.

That same spirit shaped the hospitality extended to attending couples. Every participant was welcomed with warmth and respect and encouraged to grow in faith, prayer, and marital commitment. The conference created space for couples to reflect on the sacred vocation of marriage and strengthen their relationships.

Returning to Cleveland also stirred cherished memories of our late uncle, Bishop James P. Lyke, who served there from 1979 to 1989. Cleveland holds a special place in our hearts, not only because of family ties but also because it was among the first places where our ministry flourished beyond Chicago.

We left Cleveland grateful and renewed. The conference reminded us that effective marriage ministry is built through trust, generosity, collaboration, and faith. Most of all, as the Holy Spirit has done throughout nearly 50 years of ministry, this experience reenergized us to continue helping couples bear witness to God's presence through faithful, lifelong sacramental marriage.

Some of our publications are available through the Office of Black Catholic Ministries, Diocese of Cleveland.



Visit our website to learn more about our ministries and subscribe to receive our email newsletter.

dioceseofcleveland.org/BlkCatholicsCLE

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