LOOKING BACK AT 2015

Twenty fifteen was a very good year for three high school seniors: Faith Ogbennaya, and twins Julian and Jonathan Hamilton. They were the proud recipients of the annual Bishop Joseph A. Francis Scholarship Award. Each student received one thousand dollars towards their tuition.

Faith, a member of Blessed Sacrament/St. Charles Borromeo Parish, is a graduate of St. Vincent Academy. She is presently a freshman at Drew University. Both Julian and Jonathan attended Teaneck High School and are parishioners of St. Anastasia Parish. Jonathan, tied for first place with Faith, is a freshman at Penn State and Julian is a freshman at Ramapo College. One thousand dollars was also given to Assumption College for Sisters. “Teach a Sister…Touch the World” has been their motto. For more than twenty years, the sisters have educated over 250 Sisters from thirty-two countries representing thirty-two different religious communities.

Since November was designated as Black Catholic History month in 1990, the Office of African American, African & Caribbean Apostolate has endeavored to focus on educating students in elementary school on the achievements of both past and present Catholics of African descent. This year seven students from the Archdiocese of Newark were honored for their essays. Garnering first place were two sixth graders, both from St. Michael’s in Newark, Sebastian Desir and Corey Bernard, seventh
This year, I decided instead of making resolutions that I probably would have forgotten or broken by now, to simply concentrate daily on the many gifts and blessings I have received and still am receiving.

My mantra goes like this. Thank you God for waking me up to a new and beautiful day. It is beautiful because I am alive and have another day to receive your blessings. I want to thank you now for any hurt or misunderstanding that I may experience, as well as the big and little surprises that will come my way today. May this day be a time of blessing for me and those I hold dear. A time to renew my commitment to follow your Son, Jesus. Thank you for the gifts of sight, hearing and yes, the very breath that I am taking now.

Walk with me and please pick me up if I fall. I am your daughter and I love you. And if I don’t love you, I want to love you. Amen

I can do all things in Him
Who gives me strength
With a Plan And a Prayer

IMANI
Is published by the Office of African American, African & Caribbean Apostolate
171 Clifton Avenue, Newark, NJ 07014
Director: Sr. Patricia Lucas, DHM
Grace Lee Boggs (1915-2015) is an activist, writer, and speaker whose seven decades of political involvement encompass the major U.S. social movements of the past hundred years. A daughter of Chinese immigrants, Boggs received her B.A. from Barnard College (1935) and her Ph.D. in Philosophy from Bryn Mawr College (1940). She developed a twenty-year political relationship with the black Marxist, C.L.R. James, followed by extensive Civil Rights and Black Power Movement activism in Detroit in partnership with husband and black autoworker, James Boggs (1919-93).

Grace Lee Boggs’s published writings include *Revolution and Evolution in the Twentieth Century* (with James Boggs, Monthly Review Press, 1974; reissued with new introduction by Grace Lee Boggs, 2008); *Conversations in Maine: Exploring Our Nation’s Future* (with James Boggs, Freddy Paine, and Lyman Paine; South End Press, 1978); and *Living for Change: An Autobiography* (University of Minnesota, 1998). Her writings and interviews with her have also been widely disseminated through newspapers, magazines, websites, and academic journals.

In her nineties, Grace remains much in demand as a public speaker and exceptionally active as a community activist and weekly columnist for the *Michigan Citizen*. Her many honors include honorary doctorates from the University of Michigan, Wooster College, Kalamazoo College, and Wayne State University; lifetime achievement awards from the Detroit City Council, Organization of Chinese Americans, Anti-Defamation League (Michigan), Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, Museum of Chinese in the Americas, and Association for Asian American Studies; *Detroit News* Michiganian of the Year; and a place in both the National Women’s Hall of Fame and Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame.

*From Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.  
1929-1968  
Civil Rights Leader, Pastor, and Founder of Southern Christian Leader Conference

Nelson (Rolihlahla) Mandela  
1918-2013  
Statesman, Humanitarian  
Father of his Country’s Freedom

Malcolm X  
1925-1965  
Human Rights Activist

Harriet Tubman  
1821-1913  
Moses of Fugitive Slaves

Pearl Bailey  
1918-1990  
Singer, Actress, Best-selling Author

Frederick Douglass  
1817-1895  
Abolitionist, Orator, Statesman
Honoring Black History Month

Most Reverend Joseph A Francis
1923-1997
Auxiliary Bishop
Archdiocese of Newark, NJ

Booker T. Washington
1856-1915
Founder of Tuskegee Institute

W.E.B. DuBubols
1868-1963
Author, Scholar and Organizer

Barack Obama is the 44th and current President of the United States. The first African American to serve as U.S. President. First elected to the Presidency in 2008, he won a second Term in 2012.

Michelle Obama
United States First African American First Lady

Dr. Maya Angelou
1928-2014
American Author, Poet, Dancer and Singer
Looking back at 2015

Grader Trinity Mock from St. Joseph in Jersey City and eighth grader Judith Ferreira from St. Michael’s in Newark. All first place winners received a twenty-five dollar gift card and a framed certificate.

The three second place winners also receiving a framed certificate were sixth grader Asdiah Shabazz from St. Joseph in East Orange, Jayson Caguana a seventh grader from St. Michael’s in Newark and eighth grader Kasandra Maldonado also from St. Michael’s. We congratulate parents, teachers and students for their work.

The height of our celebration each year is Mass. St. Mary’s Abbey in Newark served as our host parish and the Most Reverend Guy Sansaricq was the principal celebrant. A reception followed in the school hall.
During the 1970’s as the population of the Oranges changed, both parishes experienced hard times. In the early Eighties, it was decided to merge Holy Spirit Parish and Our Lady Help of Christians Parish to continue to provide for needs of a changing community.

Holy Spirit celebrated her 50th Anniversary at a grand banquet in June 1981. The two parishes were brought together at the East Orange site of Our Lady Help of Christians, which was larger and home to the school. Holy Spirit Church was sold to a Protestant congregation. The first Mass of the newly merged parish was offered Christmas Eve 1981.

Today the combined parish, with thirty-plus ministries, serves a largely Haitian congregation in Creole and the African-American congregation in English, and been ably served for the past thirty three years by Rev. George Lutz, Rev. Henry Rawls, Rev Thomas Lipnicki, Rev. Michael Walters and presently Rev. Jean Max Osias (recently installed as Pastor on September 27, 2015), has repeatedly had her right to exist challenged, yet

We remain strong, because.... “We are one in the Lord”

Compiled by Charles Brooks from:

1. Seeds of Faith, Branches of Hope - The Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey-by Reverend Christopher Ciccarino.

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