

2025 AD

Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Parish

Reverend Monsignor Charles Pope, Pastor

Sunday, February 9, 2025

Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Parish's African-American History Commemoration Remembering the History of the Saint Cyprian Parish 1893-1966

The parish known as Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian can trace its beginnings to two distinct churches—St. Cyprian, established in 1893, and Holy Comforter, established in 1904. This is a brief history of St. Cyprian's parish. After the Civil War, there were large movements of African-Americans from the south into cities, especially to the north, and many came to Washington, DC. Some settled in the Capitol Hill neighborhood. These Black Catholics attended St. Peter's Church at Second & C Streets, SE, and it is here that this story begins. Throughout the latter half of the 19th Century, St. Peter's parish continued to grow and prosper, yet the African-Americans who worshipped there were never fully accepted as members of the church community. Due to Jim Crow Laws, they were made to sit in the back of the church, use different doors from white church members, and eventually excluded from the main sanctuary and forbidden to be married or baptized at the main altar. Though there was precedent for African-Americans to break away and form their own churches, the blacks at St. Peter's became frustrated when they were unable to establish their own church because there were so few black priests in the United States. In 1887, Fr. James R. Matthews (who was not African-American) came to St. Peter's as assistant pastor and began to work diligently with the African-American Catholics to create their own parish where they would feel welcomed. Before being transferred, he convinced Fr. J. M. O'Brien to write the Archdiocese of the Catholic Diocese in Baltimore asking to establish St. Cyprian parish. In 1892, Cardinal Gibbons agreed that the time for such a move was right and he had Fr. Matthews transferred back to Capitol Hill.



Fr. James Matthews

At the same time, Miss Mary Atkins offered a plot of land at 8th Street to Fr. Matthews to be used for a school for African-American children. Fr. Matthews invited the Oblate Sisters of Providence to take charge of the school. By 1894, a larger school building was erected at 310—8th Street and named St. Ann's Academy. In 1964, the school eventually merged with Holy Comforter School.



On March 12, 1893, the group of African-Americans who had been meeting in St. Peter's hall were officially organized as St. Cyprian Parish and recognized by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. By April 18, 1893, a tract of land at 13th & C Streets, SE, was purchased for the sum of \$12,480 with funds raised through donations by parishioners, and loans from the Cardinal, as well as from societies who assist the Black community. The Church and rectory were built on this land. Ground was broken on July 1, 1893, and the cornerstone was laid on September 24, 1893. A ceremony to celebrate the laying of the cornerstone of the new church included a parade witnessed by more than 10,000 people. Cardinal Gibbons marched with the parishioners to the site and spoke at the dedication. The pioneering members of St. Peter's Church, who had the courage and vision to establish the parish of St. Cyprian, were rewarded for their dedication when St. Cyprian's opened the door to its new Church building on June 2, 1894, just eight months after the laying of the cornerstone.

St. Cyprian became a thriving force in the community. During the church's first year, there were 1500 members, with 250 children attending Sunday School. That same year over 200 people were baptized. St. Cyprian also became the only Catholic parish in the country to provide its members with an adult night school.

During those early years, the parish was blessed by the efforts of many dedicated parishioners who worked closely with the founding Pastor, Father (later Monsignor) James Matthews who served the parish from 1893-1934. In 1943, St. Cyprian was transferred to the Josephites (*organized in 1893 as an American missionary group devoted to evangelizing African-Americans*). Throughout the years, St. Cyprian continued to be the focal point of the Capitol Hill African-American community. In 1966, however, this pivotal force faced a serious challenge when its magnificent buildings needed extensive repairs that proved too expensive to undertake. Fr. Burke, the pastor at the time of the closing, explained that over \$350,000 was needed to repair the buildings and he approached Cardinal O'Boyle and suggested a possible merger with Holy Comforter since this parish had suffered a serious decline in membership. After much deliberation, Cardinal O'Boyle, with reservation, agreed to merge the parishes. Yet it must be said that things did not go smoothly and many parishioners today still express concern over the way the whole matter was handled. The announcement of the closing came suddenly on a Sunday in late August 1966. The parishioners were told that within two weeks their parish buildings would be closed. With two weeks notice, no one had time to raise funds so they had to move to the Holy Comforter Parish building. The St. Cyprian Parish buildings stood empty for five years until 1971 when they were demolished. A plaque commemorating the site of St. Cyprian is located at that site today. In 1966, the blended parish of Holy Comforter-St. Cyprian was formed and managed by the Josephites. In 1984, the parish was returned to the care of diocesan priests and continues to serve the community. The merged school unfortunately closed in 2007.

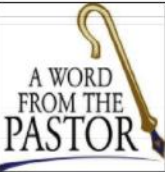
5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Readings This Weekend:

Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8 1 Cor 15:1-11 Luke 5:1-11

Readings Next Weekend:

Jer 17:5-8 1 Cor 15:12, 16-20 Luke 6:17, 20-26



The Gospel today shows how the Lord prepares his Apostles to be prophets and evangelizers. The focus is on Simon Peter. First, note that he seeks Simon's **Help**. Jesus uses Simon's boat to preach from. What talents or resources do you have that the Lord can use? Next, note Peter's **Hesitation**. The Lord invites him to go to deeper waters and lower his nets for a catch. Peter is tired and doubts that such an effort will be successful. Almost with humor in his voice he says, "At your command I will lower the nets." He expects nothing. Too often we doubt God as well. Next, notice the **Harvest**. So heavy is the net that it is at the point of breaking. But look at what even a little obedience will do. What might happen if we obey God despite being tired or doubtful? Next, note Peter's **Humility**. He sees that his doubt and lack of faith were sinful and he repents. How have you or I sinfully doubted God's providence? Finally, note Peter's **Heeding** of the Lord's invitation to come away and be a fisher of men. Peter has learned and is now ready to step out. What about you?

FUNERAL: *Mervin Shello (2/10)*

† MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK †

Sunday, February 9 *Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
 8:00am Sr. Eleanor Marie Wedge, OSP †
 9:30am Intentions of our First Responders
 11:00am Brevard Smith †
 7:00pm For All Souls lost in the recent plane tragedies †
Monday, February 10 *St. Scholastica, Virgin*
 7:00am Michael Leonard Barnes (B'day) †
Tuesday, February 11 *Our Lady of Lourdes*
 7:00am Intentions of Rev. Raymond Kemp (B'day)
Wednesday, February 12
 7:00am Eric Tompkins (B'day)
Thursday, February 13
 7:00am Intentions of Cherice Drumgoole (B'day -2/12)
Friday, February 14 *Sts. Cyril, Monk & Methodius, Bishop*
 7:00am Sarah Shackelford †
Saturday, February 15
 8:00am For the People
 4:30pm William Barnes †



MASS INTENTIONS: It is a spiritual work of mercy to pray for others, both living and deceased. If you would like to offer a Mass in memory of a friend or family, call 202-546-1885 or hscstaff@hscchurch.org. The customary stipend is \$10 per intention.

DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

MONDAY: GEN 1:1-19 MARK 6:53-56
TUESDAY: GEN 1:20-2:4A MARK 7:1-13
WEDNESDAY: GEN 2:4B-9, 15-17 MARK 7:14-23
THURSDAY: GEN 2:18-25 MARK 7:24-30
FRIDAY: GEN 3:1-8 MARK 7:31-37
SATURDAY: GEN 3:9-24 MARK 8:1-10



FAITH DIRECT (Electronic Tithing): We offer electronic tithing through *Faith Direct*. Here are 3 ways to get info and register:

1. Scan the QR code to the right.
2. Text "Enroll" to 301-478-8900 to give.
3. Go online to faith.direct/DC59 and register.

This eGiving service is **FREE**. You can register to have your tithes automatically deducted twice a month or give a one-time gift/donation. **Questions?** Contact Kim Peaks (kpeaks@hscchurch.org or 202-546-1885).



Stay Connected

- Visit our website - hscchurch.org
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 1. Text **HCSC** to **84576** OR
 2. Visit <https://hscchurch.flocknote.com/>
- Download the **MyParishApp** to your mobile phone and turn on notifications to get parish updates
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MASS ATTENDANCE	
February 2, 2025	
4:30pm	36
8:00am	74
9:30am	40
11:00am	175
7:00pm	61
Total:	386

THIS WEEK AT THE PARISH

Monday (2/10) 6:30pm HCSC Leader's Meeting	Wednesday (2/12) 7:30pm Adult Bible Study (Zoom)
Tuesday (2/11) 10:30am Seniors Bible Study	Friday (2/14) 6:00pm Holy Hour w/confession



OUR CHURCH SANCTUARY IS OPEN FROM 8AM—8PM every day for you to come in for private prayer. Consider spending quiet, personal time in the presence of our Lord and pray for healing, strength, courage and for each other as we face many challenges and struggles throughout our daily lives. All are welcome.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION or HOLY HOUR is held **EVERY FRIDAY from 6—7PM** in the sanctuary. This Catholic devotion dates back to the early days of the Church. During adoration, a consecrated host is exposed, allowing us to sit and pray in the true presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Confessions are also heard at this time.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT:
Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Roman Catholic Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, exists to evangelize and to uphold Christian values by promoting the teachings of the Church in Word, Sacrament and Witness.

OUR VISION STATEMENT:
A welcoming, embracing and joyful faith family richly rooted in the community today, tomorrow and forever.

5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PARISH LIFE



FRIENDLY SENIORS BIBLE STUDY: Come and join with other seniors from the parish on **Tue., Feb. 11th at 10:30AM** in the chapel with Deacon Flagg. Great opportunity to fellowship & learn!




February is Black History Month in the USA—This month is an annual commemoration of Black Americans' history and celebrated in honor of their contributions to the

United States and the world. In 1926, this celebration was founded by Harvard-trained historian Carter G. Woodson and was initially called Negro History Week. During the nation's bicentennial in 1976, President Gerald R. Ford extended the celebration to a month. Throughout the month, our parish will provide resources and other information so that we all may become more aware of the gifts of our multi-cultural community. Our parish celebrates this special annual recognition due to the combined history of two parishes: *Holy Comforter* and *Saint Cyprian* which were formed when racial separation was an accepted form of practice in our country—but our current combined parish is a testament that nothing is greater than God. *To God Be The Glory!*

The Archdiocese of Washington invites all to join them for a Mass celebrating Black History Month on **Sat., Feb. 22nd at 10AM** at the Church of the Incarnation with Bishop Roy E. Campbell, Auxiliary Bishop as the Principal Celebrant.



The observances of **NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK** (Feb. 7-14) and **WORLD MARRIAGE DAY** (Sun.,

Feb. 9) are an opportunity to focus on building a culture of life and love that begins with supporting and promoting marriage and the family. The 2025 theme is **"Marriage: Source of Hope, Spring of Renewal. Pursue a Lasting Love!"** To learn more about this USCCB marriage initiative, scan the QR code  or visit: www.foryourmarriage.org/celebrate-national-marriage-week/.

On Sat., Feb. 8th, the Archdiocese of Washington celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage with a Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Our parish had a number of couples in attendance.



SAVE THE DATE: On **Sun., March 2nd** at 1:00PM, we will host our **LENTEIN FAMILY DAY** at the Center City Public Charter School (15th & E. Capitol Sts., SE). This

year's theme is: *Lenten Up for Jubilee*. Our parish has been chosen as a Jubilee parish for this 'Year of the Jubilee' and we will learn more about this special designation and how you can participate. Join us for food, fellowship & fun for the entire family. Stay tuned to RSVP!



Holy Name Society 'Warm Faith & Works' Clothing Drive! Donate your gently used or new winter clothing items. Collection boxes are in rear of church. Last day to donate: Feb. 9th. If you were not to donate clothing items, please use an envelope (on small table in rear of church) and make a monetary donation.

Biblical Basics of the Greatest Story Ever Told



This year, our parish will set our focus on the *"Biblical Basics of the Greatest Story Ever Told"*. The Scriptures teach us why and how we exist, what happened to us in Original Sin and How God, in his great mercy, has redeemed us and called us back to Him in newness of life. This will be a whole-parish catechesis, led by our pastor, in three stages. Words from a keynote song titled *Just a Little Talk with Jesus* helps us to understand the 3 stages:

- i) **OUR FALL**— *I once was lost in Sin,*
- ii) **OUR REDEEMPTION** — *But Jesus took me in,*
- iii) **OUR GRACE** — *And then a little Light from Heaven Filled my Soul.*

A reflection by Msgr. Pope on the bible stories will be in the bulletin **every other week**. They are also on our website (scan the QR code) or have them emailed via **FlockNote** along with a video. **To sign-up** to receive emails/videos, or visit: hscchurch.flocknote.com and sign up for Bible Basics! FlockNote is a FREE service!



Yes, Just a little talk with Jesus made me whole!



CAUTION-PARKING ENFORCEMENT: Please take care to read the parking signs when parking in or around bus stops and corners. Parishioners are receiving parking tickets on Sunday mornings when they park in bus stop lanes. The public buses have cameras on the front of their vehicles and automatically takes photos of vehicles in these marked areas. Please note that limited parking is allowed in the parking lot behind Center City Public Charter School (15th & E. Capitol Sts) - enter through alley.



CATHOLIC CHURCH SOCIAL TEACHINGS & IMMIGRATION: In regards to the current situation in our country regarding immigrants, Msgr. Pope has written an editorial on our church's teaching on welcoming immigrants to America while maintaining a balance. Pick up a copy in the rear of church.

BIBLE STUDIES AT HCSC



YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY: Mondays at 7:15PM in the rectory w/Msgr. Charles Pope.



WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY: held every Wednesday via Zoom at 7:15PM w/Msgr. Charles Pope. Sign up at hscchurch.flocknote.com to receive Zoom link.

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Rev. Msgr. Charles Pope, Pastor (pastor1@hscchurch.org)
Deacon James P. Flagg II (jflaggII@gmail.com)

For information on membership, sacraments and funerals contact rectory staff at hscstaff@hscchurch.org or (202) 546-1885.

MASS TIMES: **Saturday** 8AM & 4:30AM (vigil);
Sunday 8AM, 9:30AM, 11AM and 7PM;
Weekdays Mon—Fri: 7AM (8AM on holidays)

RECTORY OFFICE HOURS:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 10AM—6PM
Thursday, Saturday & Sunday: Closed

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Catherine E. Graham
Joan M. Graham
Ernestine C. Jackson
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HCSC

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JAMES A. AND ELIZABETH G. HILL
 AND
VERMELLE H. HOWARD
*Love Always,
 The Family*

In Loving Memory of
OTHA JOHN HAMER JR.
OTHA JOHN HAMER III
"ETERNAL LOVE"
 ~Anna, Othalene, Lataunya,
 Betty - wife and mother

In Loving Memory of
Lillian H. Myrick
Charles Myrick Sr.
Leon (Tony) Myrick
Lucy Myrick
Lucy Jones
Shirley Ann Jackson
The Family

In Loving Memory of
Mattie Barclay
Helene Crutchfield
Edgell Fairfax
Elizabeth Fairfax
Clyde Fairfax Sr.
Clyde (Guy) Fairfax Jr.
The Family

In Memory of
Our Deceased Members
HCSC
 Holy Name Society


 In Memory of
OUR DECEASED SODALISTS
 HCSC SODALITY

In Loving Memory of
 The Deceased Jenifers:
 Oscar, Mary, Helena, Bay, David,
 Baby Sis, Beverly, Frankie, David,
 Neal, Kimberly, Cyprian Jr., Jovan


*Still Loved, Still Missed &
 Very Dear, The Family*

In Memory of
**Winnie,
 Ray,
 Bertie**

In Memory of
**Hump,
 Will, Phil
 Henny**

In Loving Memory
Austina H. Jones
Mother
We Love You Always
Willie, Lawrence & Maria

To Our Beloved
Kenyon L. Jones
Son & Father
*We'll always love you,
 Mom, Kids & Venita*



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Anthony Maxwell Smart
(Tony)
 - The Family

In Loving Memory of
James & Hattie Nicholson & Norman Williams
 From the Family

In Loving Memory of
James O. & Reba L. Neale
 and
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Willie & Gwendolyn Jones


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Deceased Members of
Macon Family
Holton Family
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Anderson Family
Always Remembered and Loved


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 especially Dennis C. Williams & Thomas E. Smith
 Loving Memories from
 The Family

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