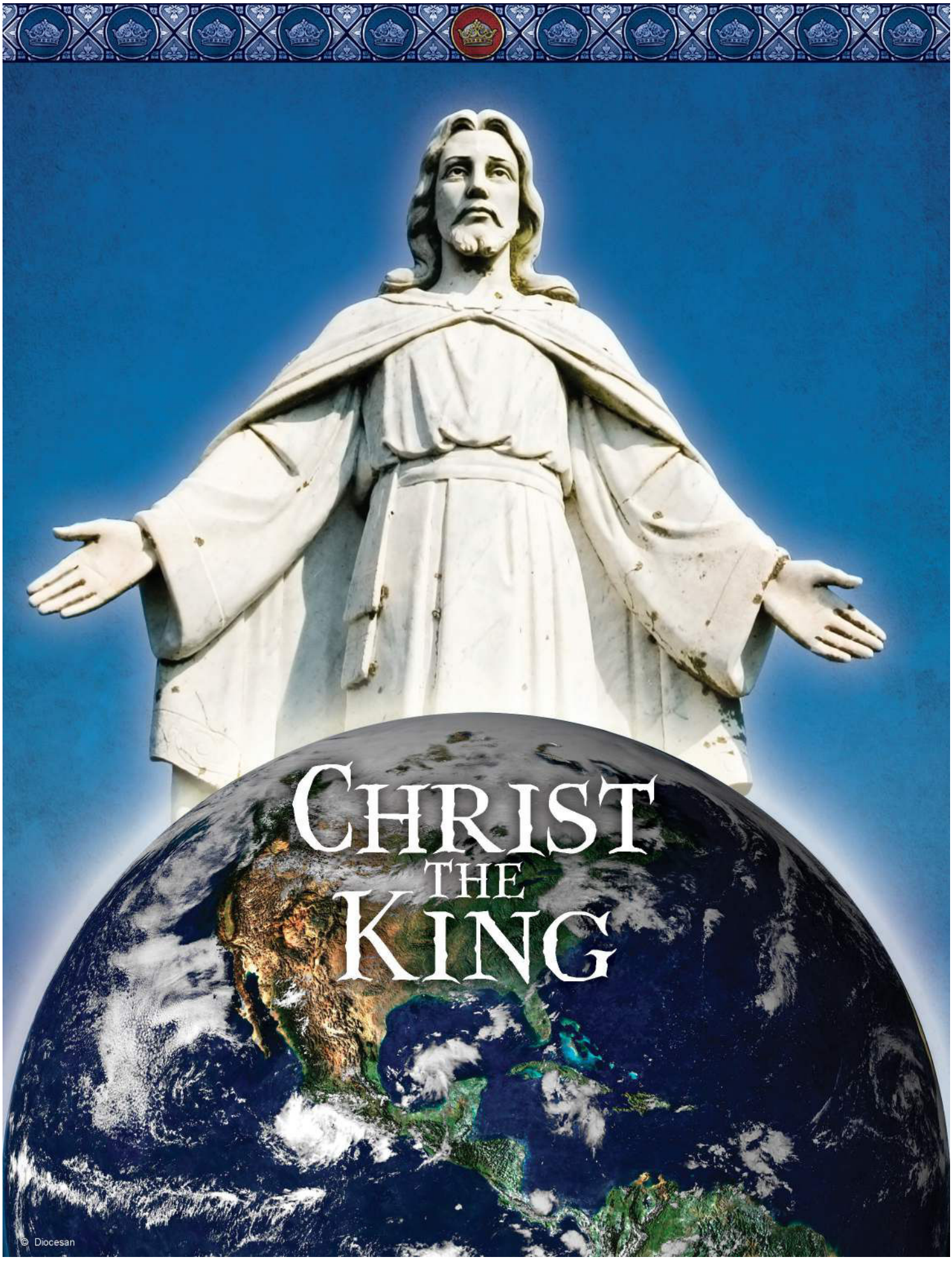
CHRIST
THE
KING
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FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING

Readings This Weekend:
Ezekiel 34:11-12,15-17 1Corinthians15:20-26,28 Matthew 25:31-46
Readings Next Weekend:
Isaiah 63:16b-17,19b,64:2-7 1Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark13:33-37

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

On this Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe, we are presented with three portraits of our King. First He is the **CARING KING**. The first reading has God say, I myself will look after and tend my sheep, as a shepherd tends his flock when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark. Thus, the Lord cares for us and seeks us when we stray, calls to us and seeks to draw us back. He is a caring King. The Second reading depicts Jesus as the **COSMIC KING**. He is king of all things, not just us. We are told that every satanic enemy of his will be put under his feet even death itself and that all things will be subject to him. For now this does not always appear so, but in the end, Jesus' complete sovereignty over the whole cosmos will be evident to all. He is the cosmic King. Lastly, he is presented in the Gospel as the **COMING KING**. For he shall come upon the clouds and take his judgment seat and all will be brought before him. Here we see a lot of paradox, for our King, Jesus, is depicted as a King who was hungry, thirsty, imprisoned, ill, naked and a stranger, for he identifies with all and to serve or neglect them, is to serve or neglect Him. Remember this, if you have loved the poor and the needy, God will never forget what you have done. The poor may not be able to reward you, but Jesus who is in them, will pay you back a million times over. He is the coming King and has the power to do so. To serve this King is to serve and love his poor and needy children

FUNERAL — Charles Douglas (11/23)

† MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK †

Sunday, November 22 *Our Lord Jesus Christ, King*
8:00am Forrester Barclay (B'day) †
9:30am Intentions of Felicia Miller (B'day)
11:00am William Donnelly †
7:00pm *For the Poor Souls*
Monday, November 23 *St. Clement I, Pope & Martyr, St. Columban, Abbott*
7:00am Intentions of Dwayne & Marcie Holton (23rd Anniversary)
Tuesday, November 24 *St. Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest and Companions*
7:00am *For the Poor Souls*
Wednesday, November 25 *Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin & Martyr*
7:00am Mabel Thomas †
7:00pm Intentions of Residents of Blackstone Flat Condominium
Thursday, November 26 *Thanksgiving Day*
8:00am Intentions of Carolyn Poole (101st Birthday)
Friday, November 27
8:00am Intentions of Eileen Elgin (B'day)
Saturday, November 28
8:00am Intentions of Gergory Vines (B'day)
4:30pm Nathaniel Williams †

DAILY MASS READINGS FOR THE WEEK

MONDAY:	REVELATIONS 14:1-3,4B-5	LUKE 21:1-4
TUESDAY:	REVELATIONS 14:14-19	LUKE 21:5-11
WEDNESDAY:	REVELATIONS 15:1-4	LUKE 21:12-19
THURSDAY:	REVELATIONS 18:1-2,21-23,19:1-3,9A	LUKE 21:20-28
FRIDAY:	REVELATIONS 20:1-4,11-21:2	LUKE 21:29-33
SATURDAY:	REVELATIONS 22:1-7	LUKE 21:34-36

View this bulletin online at www.DiscoverMass.com

ParishSOFT Giving

ELECTRONIC TITHING: Our parish offers electronic tithing through *ParishSOFT Online Giving*. For more information:

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- Download the **MyParishApp** to your mobile phone and turn on notifications to receive parish updates.
- Follow us on social media:
  Facebook.com/HCSCChurch hcsc_church

MASS ATTENDANCE
November 15, 2026

4:30pm 40
8:00am 64
9:30am 37
11:00am 143
7:00pm 70
Total: 354

For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them. Matthew 18:20

THIS WEEK AT THE PARISH

Sunday(11/22)
9:15am Sunday School

Tuesday (11/24)
10:30am Senior Bible Study
7:00pm Adult Choir Rehearsal
7:00pm OCIA/Faith Formation

Wednesday (11/25)
7:00pm Mass of Thanksgiving
7:30pm Adult Bible Study (Zoom)

Thursday (11/26) *Thanksgiving*
Rectory Office Closed
8:00am Morning Mass

Friday (11/27)
Rectory Office Closed
8:00am Morning Mass
6pm-7pm Eucharistic Adoration

Saturday (11/28)
9:00am Knights of Peter Claver mtg

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

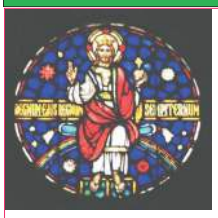
⇒ **EVERY FRIDAY from 6-7 PM** in the sanctuary.
⇒ **EVERY FIRST FRIDAY** of the month from **8 AM until 7 PM** in the sanctuary.

MASS INTENTIONS: It is a spiritual work of mercy to pray for others, both living and deceased. To offer a Mass in memory of a friend or family, call 202-546-1885. The customary stipend is $10 per intention.

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.

Feast of Christ the King

Parish Life



TODAY IS THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING: On the last Sunday of each liturgical year, the Church celebrates the *Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, or Christ the King*. Pope Pius XI instituted this feast in 1925 with his encyclical *Quas primas* ("In the first") to respond to growing secularism and atheism. He recognized that attempting to *"trust Jesus Christ and his holy law"* out of public life would result in continuing discord among people and nations. This solemnity reminds us that while governments come and go, Christ reigns as King forever.

The Lord is King; He is robed in majesty.



THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY SCHEDULE: As we celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday and welcome the season of Advent *(which begins next Sun., Nov. 29th),* we invite our parish family to come together in prayer and gratitude on **Wed., Nov. 25th at 7:00 PM** for a Mass of Thanksgiving. In observance of the holiday, the rectory office will be closed Nov. 26th—27th. Both Thursday & Friday morning Mass is at **8 AM.**

Have a Blessed and Joyful Thanksgiving!



PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD: One of the spiritual works of mercy is to pray for the dead. November is the Church's traditional month to pray for our deceased friends and family. Mass will be celebrated every other day during November for the *Poor Souls*. **To include your relatives/friends**, write names on the *All Souls Day* envelope (included with tithing envelopes or in rear of church) and drop in collection basket or rectory office. Names are placed on the altar during November. A donation is not needed but is appreciated. **ParishSoft Giving USERS:** If you donate electronically, email your names to hcscstaff2@hcscchurch.org or call 202-546-1885.

Black Catholic History Month 2026

The Catholic Church in the United States recognizes November as Black Catholic History Month to commemorate the rich history and proud heritage of Black Catholics in the United States. We celebrate the contributions that African and African-Americans have made and continue to make to our Church. It is a unique opportunity to share, learn, and celebrate this cultural part of the Catholic Church's history. We will post events within the Archdiocese of Washington along with other resources. **See flyer in the bulletin.**

BIBLE STUDIES AT HCSC

FRIENDLY SENIORS BIBLE STUDY: held the **third** and **fourth** Tuesday of every month at 10:30 AM in the chapel.

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

Many Gifts, One Body

Liturgical Ministry Recruitment Campaign

Our parish has begun our ***Many Gifts, One Body Liturgical Ministries Recruitment Campaign***—a six-week invitation to discover the many ways you can share your gifts in service to our parish community as a member of one of the liturgical ministries.

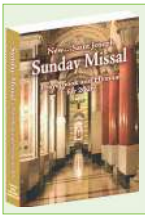
Earlier in the fall, members of our Adult & Youth Choirs, Lectors, Ushers, Sound Ministry, Altar Guild/Sacristan Ministry, Altar Servers, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion shared with you what they do, why their ministry matters, the gifts and skills that are helpful, and the time commitment involved. We pray you received much information to assist you in discerning your commitment to this parish.

Those who completed an interest card or signed up for more information, should be receiving calls, texts or emails from the ministries you have selected over the next few weeks for further instructions and details.

If you have not had an opportunity to sign up or express an interest in a ministry, contact the rectory office at 202-546-1885 and we will make sure you receive resources about our liturgical ministries.



ATTENTION LECTORS: The 2027 liturgical year begins **Sun., Nov. 29th** *(First Sunday of Advent)*. Personalized copies of the 2027 *Lectors Workbook* are available in the sacristy on the counter. Please pick up your workbook over the next couple of weeks. If you don't see your name, call the rectory office. **Please take only the workbook with your name.**



SAINT JOSEPH'S MISSALS for 2027 are available for $3.50 in the Candlelight Store *(located in the rear of the church)* **or** the rectory office. This missal is a companion guide for the Church year of Sunday masses. It lists the Sunday readings, parts of the Mass and other prayers. Ask an usher if the store is closed.



SAVE THE DATE: MEET & GREET WITH SAINT NICK on **Sun., Dec. 6th** at **9:30 AM** at the Center City Public Charter School (*15th & East Capitol Sts., SE*). We invite youth and their families to enjoy arts/crafts and light refreshments while learning about Saint Nicholas. **See flyer in rear of church.**

Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Roman Catholic Church
1357 East Capitol Street, SE, WDC 20003
202.546.1885 ❖ www.hcscchurch.org

Rev. Msgr. Charles Pope, Pastor (msgr.charles.pope@gmail.com)
Rev. Patrick Aboagye, Parochial Vicar (sirpatrick2@gmail.com)
Deacon James P. Flagg II, Permanent Deacon (jpflaggll@gmail.com)

For information on membership, funerals, sacraments (*baptism, first communion, confirmation, matrimony*) contact the rectory office at hcscstaff@hcscchurch.org or 202.546.1885.

Mass Times:

Saturday	8 AM & 4:30 PM (vigil)
Sunday	8 AM,9:30 AM, 11 AM & 7 PM
Weekdays	Mon—Fri: 7AM (8AM on holidays)
Wednesdays	7 PM (confessions 6 PM)

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

Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Roman Catholic Church

Mass of Thanksgiving

Mass on Wed., Nov., 25 - 7:00 PM

Morning Mass on Thurs., Nov. 26 - 8:00 AM
(in the chapel)



Give thanks to the Lord, who is good,whose mercy endures forever.
Psalm 106:1

Commemorating Black Catholic History Month in the United States

The Gift of the African-American Catholic Tradition by Msgr. Charles Pope

Most of you know that I've spent most of my years of priesthood ministering in African-American parishes here in Washington, DC. Over the years, this parish has become more racially and ethnically diverse, but we are still deeply rooted in the long African-American heritage and we celebrate that in particular at our 11:00 AM Sunday Mass featuring our adult choir. It is a heritage that retains deep roots in the sacred and draws richly upon the biblical norms of trust, liberation from sin, justice, and the lively experience of God's immanent presence.

I would like to share a few of the things I have learned and experienced over the years, focusing primarily on the liturgical experience. Despite the inadequacy of my words in describing it, I hope that you will grasp the rich wisdom and sacred tradition that I have been privileged to experience. I do not claim that what I write here is true of every African-American Catholic nor that the values I describe below are wholly lacking elsewhere, but just that they are widely held in the community.

EXPECTATION – Great expectations are brought to the liturgical moment. Most of my parishioners come to Mass expecting to be moved, changed, and transformed. It is expected that God, the Holy Spirit, will show up and that He will do great things. Prior to Mass there is an air of anticipation as the parishioners gather. Some call this "The Hum." The expectation is palpable and parishioners both want and expect a deep experience of God. They look forward to the songs of praise that are about to be sung and are prayerfully expectant of a good sermon through which they will "get a word" from the Lord. There is little anxiety about time and there is no need to rush. This is God's time and He is about to go to work.

ALL ABOUT GOD – Gospel music (traditional and modern) is a central facet of most African-American parishes, but a wide variety of music is sung, including spirituals, traditional hymns, and classical music. One of the glories of the musical repertoire in African-American parishes is that it is almost exclusively focused on God and what He is doing. I have remarked in the past that much modern music is far too focused on us, who we are, and what we are doing. Not so in the gospel music tradition, in which God is invariably the theme. In an anthropocentric time, this is a refreshing stream from which to draw. Regardless of your feelings about the style of gospel music, it is about God. One song says, "God is a good God, He is great God, He can do anything but fail." Another song says, "God and God alone!" Yet another says, "God never fails!" Even when we mention ourselves it is only to remember God: "We've come this far by faith; Leaning on the Lord, trusting in his holy word, He's never failed me yet!"

PRIMACY OF JOY – A serene and joyful spirit is at the heart of African-American worship. The Church is a bride—not a widow—and God is good! Even in difficult times we ought to praise the Lord. Psalm 34 says, I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth. An old African-American spiritual says, "Praise the Lord anyhow!"

Joy is manifested in many ways in African-American worship: clapping, stepping, and swaying during the singing, uplifted hands, spontaneous acclamations—even an occasional stamping of the foot!

It is a strange thing if a Catholic Mass looks less like a wedding than a funeral: sour faces and boredom. To be sure, people manifest piety in different ways. Even in African-American parishes not everyone is on his feet as the choir sings powerfully. However, it is right to manifest some glimmer of joy rather looking like we just sucked a lemon!

Joy is a great gift and it is present in abundance in African-American worship. St. Paul says, Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say it, rejoice! Your graciousness should be known to all (Phil 4:4-5). A gospel song says, "Joy, Joy, God's great joy. Joy, joy, down in my soul. Sweet, beautiful, soul saving joy, oh, joy, joy in my soul!"

TIME – This is God's time. Earthly time is largely suspended in the African-American experience of the Mass. Masses are often substantially longer than those at most Catholic parishes. At the African-American parishes where I have served, the "High Mass" lasts up to two hours.

In most Catholic parishes there is an unwritten rule that Mass should be between 45 minutes and an hour long, and sermons should be less than 10 minutes long. Some of the Masses here are an hour or less, but not the Gospel Mass, where time is more relaxed. It may be that the Holy Spirit inspires a soloist to take up the refrain of a song yet one more time. There's often an expression that comes from the congregation: "Take your time," or "Sing on!" This is God's time and He will do what He will do.

Most African-American congregations are also famous for lingering after the service. Another expression comes to mind: "Take your time leaving." Mass is one of the highlights of the week; why rush through it? Savor the moment. A song says, "We're standing on holy ground." Creativity and Freedom in the Spirit – African-American Catholic worship is careful to follow the norms for Mass but exhibits an appreciation for creativity and for docility to the Holy Spirit. This is especially evident in music. It is rare that a soloist sings the notes of a song exactly as written. (The exception to this would be when classical music is sung). Rather, liberty is taken as the choir, soloists, organist, and director are all open to what and where the Spirit leads.

There is deep appreciation for this spontaneity; it is seen as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit interacting with the gifts in the community. A gospel song says, "Over my head, I hear music in the air. There must be a God somewhere!" There is also a history to this that stretches back to slave times. Those who were enslaved enjoyed very little freedom, but on Sundays they would gather in secluded locations. They would often take up the hymns they had heard from the European tradition but adapt them. In so doing they expressed their freedom in the Lord. The spirituals, too, are remarkably creative, manifesting a genius of both word and song. They also admit of a wide variety of interpretations; different verses are swapped in and out at the will of the singers.

All of this creativity leads to a great expectation in the liturgy. Who knows what God will do? There are moments of great delight and a sense that this is all in God's hands.

It also gives a different understanding to the presence of applause in the liturgy. Many rightly lament that in certain settings applause creates the notion of performance rather than worship, but in the African-American setting applause is an act of praise to God, thanking Him for this manifestation of the Spirit. This is made evident by the fact that the congregation most often applauds even after the songs that it sings together. This is not self-congratulation; it is an act of praise to God. The psalms say, Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy (e.g., Ps 47).

THE PREACHING MOMENT – Sermons are typically longer in African-American Parishes. At the High Mass, the sermon is usually half an hour. The congregation has great expectations for the homily and there is a great interest in spending time with the Word of God. It is expected that the preacher will not only seek to inform the congregation but to celebrate the liberating reality of the Word that is proclaimed. The Word of God does not just inform, it performs and transforms. The preacher is invited and expected not just to preach the "what," but also the "so what" and the "now what."

These expectations have challenged me over the years to be aware of the majesty of God's Word, to look deeper into its meaning, and to experience its truth and reality in my life. Only then can I really preach with the power and authority that God's Word deserves.

With more time, there is the luxury of really digging into a passage and analyzing all the lines. Many of you who read this blog have read my Sunday Sermon outlines and note that I usually break open the whole text rather than just draw out one thought or idea and preach that. The longer format permits the preacher to examine the steps often set forth by a gospel passage and to follow the passage line by line. This is a great luxury for me.

I am not alone in the preaching moment. One of the glories of the African-American preaching tradition is that the congregation has a central role in the preaching moment. It begins with their expectation. I know that they are praying for me and are supporting me as I begin. They really want to hear a word and spend some time with it. This is a moment to be savored.

The priest or deacon will often engage the congregation by taking up the tradition of "call-response," wherein he elicits a familiar response from the congregation and invites acclamations: "Somebody say, Amen." "Amen" "Is there a witness in this house?" In this way he builds on the theme and involves the congregation.

The congregation also takes a role in crafting the homily moment through spontaneous acclamations: "Amen!" "Go on, preacher!" Help him, Lord." "Make it plain, preacher!" There can be spontaneous applause and shouts as well as laughter and even some oohs and aahs.

JESUS IS HERE RIGHT NOW – In African-American Catholic worship there is a profound sense of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in every liturgy. Most traditional Anglo-Saxon Catholics prefer to express their faith in the true presence through silent adoration, bowed heads, and folded hands. The African-American tradition, though not excluding such forms, expresses this faith through exuberant joy in the Lord's presence and cultivates a celebratory experience that this is holy ground, that this is the Lord's house and He is here. Songs during Communion include texts that acknowledge this in more experiential and immanent than theological and transcendent ways. There are songs with words such as these: Jesus is here right now, I received the Living God and my heart is filled with joy, Now behold the Lamb, Taste and see the goodness of the Lord! Come now and feed our weary souls.

PERMISSION – To think that every African-American likes only gospel music, wants to shout out during homilies, and gets excited at Mass, is to stereotype. There is a whole range of personalities expressed and experienced at Mass. Some people are exuberant and expressive, others quiet and reserved. A wide variety of preferences and liturgical expressions exist.

What makes African-American worship diverse and expressive is the concept of permission. Not everyone is required to clap rhythmically at songs, but there is the permission to do so. Not everyone responds during homilies but one may. Not everyone gets to his feet as the choir sings powerfully, but there is permission to do so. There is a wonderful combination of permission without pressure.

TRUST – A key theme of African-American culture is trust in God. This has come not only from a long history of oppression but also from the experience that "God can make a way out of no way" and "do anything but fail." Gospel music and the spirituals are replete with calls to a trusting and confident faith. Here are some examples from various songs: "God never fails." "Blessed Assurance!" "Victory is mine." "Whatever my lot thou hast taught me to say It is well with my soul, it is well." "Joy comes in the morning; troubles don't last always." "He may not come when you want him, but he's always on time."

These songs of trust and assurance were very important for me in my 35th year of life when I suffered a nervous breakdown and slipped into a major depression, complete with anxiety attacks. This parish literally helped to sing me back to health.

SOBER ABOUT SIN AND CONFIDENT OF GRACE TO OVERCOME – Good, solid, biblical preaching is appreciated in the African-American tradition. It is understood that the Lord has a lot to say about sin that is plain and unambiguous.

There is also a legacy of gospel music and spirituals that speaks frankly but creatively about sin and its relation to redemption. Here are some excerpts from songs: "I once was lost in sin but Jesus took me in." "I was sinking deep in sin far from the peaceful shore. Very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more. But the Master of the sea heard my despairing cry and from the water lifted me. Love lifted me. When nothing else could help, love lifted me." "I would not be a sinner; I'll tell you the reason why. I'm afraid my Lord might call my name and I wouldn't be ready to die." "Satan wears a hypocrite's shoe. If you don't watch he'll slip it on you." "Some go to church for to sing and shout, before six months they's all tuned out." "Where shall I be when the last trumpet sounds?" "Sign me up for the Christian jubilee, write my name on the roll. I want to be ready when Jesus comes." "I've got to fast and pray, stay in his narrow way, keep my life clean each and every day. I want to go with him when he comes back, I come too far and I'll never turn back!"

So sin is real but so is grace to liberate us. One song says, "I'm not what I want to be but I'm not what I used to be, a wonderful change has come over me."

These are just a few of the many lessons I have learned from my parishioners over the years. As you can see, African-American Catholics have important gifts to share with the wider Church. I want to be sure to express my gratitude for this gift of culture and tradition and for the gift that every parishioner has been to me. I have learned far more than I have ever preached. I have come to know by experience that encountering Christ does not just happen from the priest to the faithful, but also from the faithful to the priest.

I realize that not everyone prefers the relaxed exuberance described here; some are more partial to quieter and more traditional forms. I have celebrated the Traditional Latin Mass for over 30 years and appreciate its beauty as well. Today the Church allows greater diversity; what I set forth here is that I have been blessed and enriched in this tradition, as I have in others. May God be praised.

NOTE: The document was original written by Msgr. Charles Pope as an article for *Our Sunday Visitor* in February 2011.

In Memory of
John N. Graham
Catherine E. Graham
Joan M. Graham
Ernestine C. Jackson
Sharon L. Graham
Always Loved, Remembered, Missed

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Lucy Jones
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Ray,
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In Memory of
Hump,
Will, Phil
Henny

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Still Loved, Still Missed & Very Dear, The Family

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

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



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

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