

**Black Catholic History Month is a time for us to celebrate the contributions of Black Catholics to the Roman Catholic tradition.**



**African American US Catholic Bishops**



**Most Reverend  
Fernand J. Cheri, O.F.M.  
Auxiliary Bishop of  
New Orleans  
Ordained March 23, 2015**



**Fr. Charles Uncles- (1859-1933)**

Ordained in December 1891, Father Charles Randolph Uncles, a native of Baltimore, was the **first black American ordained a Roman Catholic priest in the United States.** He was one of the founders of the St. Joseph's Society of the Sacred Heart, formed to minister to the black community.



**Blessed Cyprian Michael Iwene Tansi, Priest and Monk**

September 1903 – January 20, 1964  
Born in Aguleri, Anambra State, Nigeria  
Died in Leicester,  
Beatified, March 22, 1998 by Pope John Paul II  
Feast Day January 20

**ON the Road to Sainthood  
African Americans being considered for  
Canonization**



**Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange (1784-1882). . .**  
Mother Mary Lange was the foundress and first Superior General of the Oblate Sisters of Providence (1829-1832), the first congregation of African American women religious in the history of the Catholic Church



**Mother Henriette Delille (1818-1862)**  
Mother Henriette Delille (1812-1862) A free woman of color in New Orleans, Mother Delille founded the Sisters of the Holy Family in 1842. The congregation ministered to slaves, at a time when educating slaves was illegal. Mother Delille was the first U.S. born African American formally postulated for canonization.



**Pierre Toussaint (1766- 1853)**

He was born into slavery in Haiti, Toussaint became a freeman, successful businessman, and philanthropist in New York City. He is the only lay person honored, alongside cardinal- archbishops.



**Father Augustus Tolton (1854-1897)**

He was born into slavery in Missouri. Ordained in Rome in 1886, Tolton was the **first recognized Black American priest.** Pastor of St. Monica in Chicago, Tolton became the spiritual leader of the 19th century National Black Catholic Congress movement. *"I have never felt I am a slave to any man or woman but I am a servant of Almighty God who made us all. When one of his children is in need, I am glad to be His slave."*



**Julia Greeley  
(1835 and 1855- death June 7, 1918)**

A former slave born in Hannibal, Missouri, is now being considered for sainthood in the Catholic Church for her inspirational life of devotion and service. Greeley exemplified three qualities of holiness throughout her life, Bishop Rodriguez said: humility, perseverance and faith.

**History, Heritage and Truth**



The National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus (NBCCC) of the United States voted on Tuesday, July 24, 1990 while meeting in convention at Fordham University in New York, to establish November as **BLACK CATHOLIC HISTORY MONTH.** The reason behind the selection of the month of November was the number of important dates to Catholics of African descent that fell within this month.

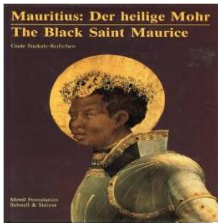
- **Nov. 1 All Saints Day** = an opportunity to review the lives of the hundreds of Saints of African descent in the first 300 years of the Church.
- **Nov. 2 All Souls Day** = a time to remember all those African lost to cruel treatment in the Middle Passage crossing of the Atlantic Ocean.
- **Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> Martin de Porres** became the first black American saint. He was canonized by Pope John XXIII on May 16, 1962.
- **Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> The birth of St. Augustine** in 354 A.D., the first Doctor of the Church from North Africa.
- **Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> The death of Zumbi of Palmares** in Brazil, South American founder of a free state for Blacks.

**Black Catholic History Month**  
 provides opportunities to learn and share the whole  
 history and rich heritage of Christian Catholicism.  
**Ubi Victoria Veritas!**  
**The Victory of Truth!**

Christianity did not originate in Europe, Black Catholic History began in the Acts of the Apostles (8: 26-40) which chronicles the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch by Philip the Deacon, the first Black African in recorded Christian history.

**The First Black Saint**

By: Henry Louis Gates Jr. Oct. 29 2012



Saint Maurice (born 250 A.D. died in A.D. 286)  
**Feast Day: September 22**



Medieval statue of St. Maurice in Magdeburg Cathedral

**Three Black Catholic Popes**

**Pope Saint Victor I 189 to 199**



Having been born in the Roman Province of Africa, he was the first African pope. Saint Victor I, the 15th Pope who reigned from 186-197 A.D. This pope was said to have decided when to celebrate Easter. He was the first Christian author to write about theology in Latin.

**Feast Day July 28**

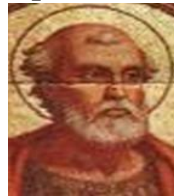
**Pope St Miltiades 311 to 314**



Then there was **Pope Saint Miltiades**, (born, Africa?—died Jan. 10, 314, Rome Italy. who served from 311-314 A.D. He wrote many of the Catholic hymns and settled issues over fasting on Thursdays or Sundays.

**Feast day December 10**

**Pope St Gelasius I (492-496)**



Lastly, there was the 49th Pope, **Pope Saint Gelasius I**. This African pope declared February 14 as “Valentine’s Day” to honor Bishop Valentine, a priest who had been executed. Gelasius was the third and last Bishop of Rome of Berber North African origin.

**Feast day November 21**

**Daniel A. Rudd, Founder National Black Catholic Congress**



**Daniel Rudd** (August 7, 1854–1933) was founder of the Colored Catholic Congress, now known as the National Black Catholic Congress

**The First Black Catholic Congress, 1889**

June 13, 2013 by Pat McNamara



**THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC TRIBUNE, AND THE PLIGHT OF BLACK CATHOLICS, 1884-1899**

Held January 1st to 3rd in 1889 at St. Augustine's Parish Hall in Washington The Washington Bee, an important Black newspaper in the nation's capital, did make the following comment in its issue of January 5th... The Congress of Colored Catholics that met in this city during the past week demonstrated a degree of intelligence and ability.

Our esteemed friend Mr. Rudd of the American Catholic Tribune was elected Chairman and the ability he displayed in the management of the convention assured us that he eserved compliments.

*American Catholic Tribune in any Detroit Library*  
*The First Black Catholic Congress, 1889*  
**COLORED CATHOLICS MEET, A NOTABLE CONVENTION BEGUN—**  
**CARDINAL GIBBONS PRESENT New York Times, January 2, 1889**