

BOWMAN FRANCIS MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

Midwest District

April 1, 2021

THE MESSENGER

ITS EASTER ALL OVER AGAIN



It is springtime in the United States. Spring is a season of new beginnings; and a tangible way in which we see how our lives are changed anew by God's grace and time. All around us, the "dead" is coming back to life" and growing, by the Genesis

of God's creation. Brothers and Sisters, it is the perfect time for us to talk with our families/our children about the new life that Christ Jesus brings to us through Jesus death and resurrection, as we see the miracle for new life all around us in this season of Spring! **ITS EASTER ALL OVER AGAIN.**

We have been living in a year of darkness and death shadows; a deep freeze of storms and no running water; long period of depression and isolation; a rebellion led by a destructive groups of hate and white supremacists; and leaders in our government that believe in lies and conspiracies that are a danger to our democracy. As Catholic Christians in the Lenten journey of life, we are mindful to pray and communicate with our God; to fast and find a healthy and balanced diet to meditate daily and be responsible for the precious bodies that God has given us; and to give alms and service to those we meet in the world. We should be reminded daily with our service, the question: "What Would Jesus Christ Do"? Service that being a ministry of presence to God's people. A ministry of self-respect and human character that can change the world. This service is about doing the small things, such as: saying hello to someone in the morning, serving with a smile a cup of coffee at a coffee shop, and calling the elderly and people feeling alone or frightened because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Lent was and is the season that the twins enjoy the most. It is "PRIMETIME" according to Fr. Chester P. He would holler words of encouragement and joy to his twin brother over a cup of decaf coffee during morning planning meetings. He saw Lent in the season of Spring as a time of renewing our: faith, hope, trust, and love in God. A season of letting go and welcoming a new beginning of self-development and spiritual growth.



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COVID-19 and Diabetes

Article taken from WebMD

Everyone needs to be careful to avoid the [coronavirus that causes COVID-19](#). If you have type 1 or [type 2 diabetes](#), you should be even more cautious. Your risk of catching the virus isn't higher than anyone else's. But you could have [worse complications](#) if you do get sick. That's especially true if your diabetes isn't well-controlled.

Diabetes and Coronavirus

Early studies have shown that about 25% of people who went to the hospital with severe COVID-19 infections had [diabetes](#). Those with diabetes were more likely to have serious complications and to die from the virus. One reason is that high blood sugar weakens the immune system and makes it less able to fight off infections. Your risk of severe coronavirus infection is even higher if you also have another condition, like heart or [lung disease](#). If you do get COVID-19, the infection could put you at greater risk for [diabetes complications](#) like [diabetic ketoacidosis](#) (DKA). DKA happens when high levels of acids called ketones build up in your blood. It can be very serious. Some people who catch the new coronavirus have a dangerous body-wide response to it, called [sepsis](#). To treat sepsis, doctors need to manage your body's fluid and electrolyte levels. DKA causes you to lose electrolytes, which can make sepsis harder to control.

Tips to Avoid Infection

The best way to avoid getting sick is to [stay home](#) as much as you can. Under the Americans With Disabilities Act, people with diabetes have the right to "reasonable accommodations at work." That includes the right to work from home or take sick leave when you need it. While vaccine are available, it is not known when they will be widely available. In the meantime, if you have to go out, keep at least 6 feet away from other people, and wear a face mask. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often while you're out and when you get home. Also wash your hands before you give yourself a finger stick or [insulin](#) shot. Clean each site first with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.

To protect you, everyone in your house should wash their hands often, especially before they cook for the family. Don't share any utensils or other personal items. And if anyone in your house is sick, they should stay in their own room, as far as possible from you. They should wear a cloth face mask when you have to be in the same room.

What to Do if You Get Sick

If you start feeling sick, stay home. Check your blood sugar more often than usual. COVID-19 can reduce your appetite and cause you to eat less, which could affect your levels. You also need more fluids than usual when you're sick. Keep [water](#) close by, and drink it often.

Some over-the-counter medicines that relieve virus symptoms like [fever](#) or [cough](#) can affect your [blood sugar levels](#). High doses of [aspirin](#) or [ibuprofen](#) can lower blood sugar levels. [Acetaminophen](#) can cause falsely high readings on a continuous glucose monitor. Many liquid cough and cold medicines are high in sugar, which can raise your blood sugar levels. Before you take them, check with your doctor or diabetes team. Tell your doctor if you've taken them and your [blood](#) sugars are out of control.

UBUNTU—“THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD” SYNOPSIS



Fr. Kenneth Hamilton, SVD, opened the inaugural series of our new educational ministry, Ubuntu (“I am because we are”), entitled “Their Eyes Were Watching God.” This series takes its name from the short novel by writer and black intellectual Zora Neale Hurston and also draws upon the point of view of the “slave” in Psalm 123: who “looks to the hand of their master/mistress” to set the tone for a ministry specifically to and for black Catholics. His emphasis was to focus the ministry from the point of view of those whose eyes seem to be watching only the actions of their purported owners but, in fact, were always watching God. This, in fact, is the heart of black theology, God watching from our point of view, seeing from this point of view a God working in our lives and for our liberation. He stated: “They seemed to be staring at the dark, but their eyes were watching God.” Who IS this God they are looking at? The God who “hears the cry of the poor”who brings good news to the oppressed....who /announces the advent of the Kingdom.”

The title of the first talk in this series was “Their Eyes Were Watching God: Talking to Black Catholics about Liberation and Having Better ‘Church’!” Taking his lead from the great pioneer of black theology, James Cone, he defined black theology as that which seeks to “make... sense of the black experience, recognize... the religious character of the black community...and depict...God as actively involved with black liberation” To approach this, he began with outlining some characteristics of the dominant white racial capitalist view of God or “white theology.” Six characteristics of white theology are: 1) that White missionary evangelizing always went hand in hand with conquest and capitalism since the Age of Discovery. 2) As a result, it was formed to preach Christianity as apolitical with an emphasis on the next life and not this one. 3) It regards religion and salvation from a capitalist ethos. For the slave this meant that, for one, they were the private property of God’s own chosen people, namely, their white masters. 4) Following the lines of certain European thought, white theology emphasizes ‘either/ors’ or “binary oppositions.”..... one over the other: white over black etc., men over women, mind over heart, spirit over body, church over state. 5) White religion is not self-reflective, not honest in that it, for example, has never been to deal truthfully with its own unrecognized desire and, thus, the missionaries tried to either demonize or to “make white” all desire, including God given sexual desires. 6) To wield its power white preachers and theologians purposely appropriated the scriptures, ignoring parts of it that speak of prophecy and liberation while emphasizing the parts which enforce their *status quo*.

He ended his talk speaking of 1) how black theology was based in defiance of white religion that dehumanized and denied the eternal soul of black persons. 2) how it took its source from the Spirituals and from the lives of black Christians, etc. 3) how we now as black Catholics—following in the defiant spirit of persons such as the “Mother of Black Catholicism,” Sr. Thea Bowman—must fight to keep the cultural advances we made to our Sunday worship, find solidarity with a wide range of political struggles for liberation, and, particularly, seek growing strength in engaging in an Afri-diasporic “Pan African Catholicism” with hundreds of millions of black Catholics throughout the world! There is strength in numbers and this is the essence of UBUNTU!

THE MESSENGER CONTINUED

This Spring will bring about new life – a new beginning because of the suffering and grief brought on by the Coronavirus: the loneliness, the sickness, the homelessness, the despair, the loss of jobs, the deaths, and the addictions that's been bringing people down. Fr. Chester would always preach Lenten messages of conversion/mindset and liberation of your body, and spirit.

Lent is a Spiritual **PRIMETIME** for us to refocus – renew – and rekindle our: journey of prayer, our walk with Christ, and our passion for life. It is a time to seek our divine purpose and to put it into action.

This is no longer the season of winter and death; but **IT'S EASTER ALL OVER AGAIN!** The “Resurrection” of Christ is happening all around us in nature during this season of Spring giving us physical reminders to celebrate **CHRIST'S RESURRECTION!**

My friends, as you walk carefully in your yard, you will see the tender flowers that have just risen from the dead. The earth's vibrations (Hosta's, Tulips, Daylilies etc.) as a note of joy and gladness. The birds are back and singing melodies of life, love and joy. Brothers and Sisters we are alive and back again to create and live in God's creation. There is a resurrection in nature; and **IT'S EASTER ALL OVER AGAIN! Oh Bless His Holy Name.**

The winter of Calvary is past; the storms of sorrow is gone, and Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whose very title in Hebrew means **THE FLOWER**, has appeared in glory today. Beautiful was that **FLOWER** when it took its roots in the dark cave of Bethlehem. Fragrant was the **FLOWER** when it was bruised and pinned to the old rugged cross which became its **VASE**; but glorious is that **FLOWER** today, for it now fully blooms never to wither away again. **ALLELUIA CHURCH!**

Sisters and brothers, so many of us have spent the past twelve months reengineering and reimagining everyday life, and as we enter what are hopefully the waning days of the Covid-19 pandemic; we are left with a single, haunting question: What now? Do we go back to the way things were? Do we once again start taking as givens all the things – the comforts and conveniences that come at a cost, the status quos and easy fixes, the unexamined preferences and biases – that we used to take as givens? Or do we take a good look at our bodies and minds, and our bruised battered world, and imagine a better way?

While we think about the Lenten season of spring time and physical resurrection of the world...which points to spiritual resurrection, (Christ Jesus resurrection), let us truly celebrate **EASTER RESURRECTION!** We honor Fr. Chester P., (Mr. Primetime himself) on his anniversary of death April 8th, and ordination to priesthood on April 16th, and spring time not just for its beauty, not just for regeneration and new life, nor for the joy that the warm sun brings to Mother earth, after a cold and stormy winter season! But for the salvation of God's creation.

We celebrate **EASTER – SPRINGTIME** because God uses it to remind us of the glory of Christ Resurrection. Jesus is **RISEN. HALLELUJAH CHURCH.**

Let us celebrate the Resurrection; and thanking God that **It's EASTER ALL OVER AGAIN.**

Happy Anniversary Chester P. and Happy Resurrection Day to Everyone.

Fr. Charles F. Smith, SVD

BOWMAN-FRANCIS TEAM MINISTRY SUCCESS STORIES

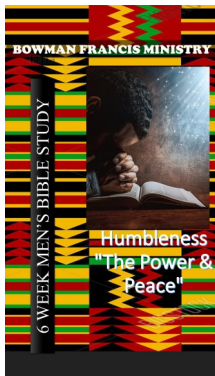


Dana Florence was born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana and is a graduate of Indiana State University where she studied Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation with a minor in Massage Therapy. Dana has decided to continue her education and is currently in her first year of Chiropractic school at Life University in Marietta, GA.

While a member of St. Rita Catholic Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, Dana was introduced to the Bowman-Francis Ministry at a very young age. Dana was a part of AOW (Ambassadors of the Word), a youth program that taught and encouraged: Emotional Development, Physical Development and Sexuality, and Spiritual Development to increase their personal relationship with God. To study and become more knowledgeable about different religions, To study the Bible and reflect on its's teachings; to increase knowledge and appreciation of the historical and spiritual concept of God in the lives of African-American people. Dana was able to travel throughout the world while a member of AOW.

Dana remembers Fr. Chester and Fr. Charles being there in every moment of her life. In every accomplishment Dana made, she received a card from Fr. Charles and Fr. Chester praising her for her accomplishments. Dana still cherishes those cards to this day. Fr. Chester & Fr. Charles helped develop Dana's faith in God to where it is in her life today. Fr. Chester always spoke positive words and left a permanent mark in her walk and faith in God. Dana continue to hold close to her heart the affirmation statement that the twins taught her. "For it is not your aptitude that determines your altitude, but it is your attitude with a teaspoon of intestinal fortitude. If I can conceive it, and believe it. I can achieve it. For my mind is a pearl I can achieve anything in the world. RESPECT ME. I AM SOMEBODY!"

NEW BIBLE STUDY



When was the last time you invited Jesus into your home, to sit down in your living room and/or at your table? It's a different feeling in the air when we're talking and sharing at the table. When we sit down with Jesus, we get the one-on-one time that's necessary to elevate us to the next level that God is calling us to. Join us for this dynamic 6 week VIRTUAL Men's Bible Study. Get QUIET, be STILL, and RELAX your mind. Be mindful and visualize opening your heart to God's Holy Spirit speaking to you.

THEME: HUMBLENESS "THE POWER & PEACE of GOD"

Every WEDNESDAY beginning

June 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th and July 7th 2021

Being mindful; and preparing your **MIND, BODY, and SPIRIT** to receive the many blessings for the:

2021 NATIONAL BLACK CATHOLIC MEN'S VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

DELIVER ME FROM MYSELF
OCTOBER 14—OCTOBER 17, 2021

UPPER ROOM

A MESSAGE FROM FR. KENNETH HAMILTON, SVD

“Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory



“We’ve got some difficult days ahead,” “But it really doesn’t matter with me now, because I’ve been to the mountaintop ... I’ve seen the Promised Land. [And] I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land”

Today, April 4, 2021, the lives of Martin Luther King Jr and Jesus come together. Easter Sunday 2021 coincides with the assassination of Dr King in 1968. The speech he gave the day before he died echoes his trust in the same God who brought Jesus through death into victory, the same God who told him that “we as a people will get to the Promised Land.”

The journey of the disciple of Jesus, then, is one into promise...not only a promise of salvation but a promise of liberation. Jesus saves the soul of the disciple and Jesus saves history itself. Jesus is the healer of the soul and the healer of bodies. He is the feeder of souls and the feeder of stomachs. He is freedom for the sinner and he is freedom for the oppressed.

His Resurrection is the one thing that stands against the power of death in our hearts---a power that threatens our living “life to the full.” But, his Resurrection is also the event that stands against entropy itself, the winding down of the universe, or at least the despair and meaningless it sometimes brings in us.

Jesus’ Resurrection takes the Good Fridays and the 400 years of slavery and the threatening “difficult days ahead” with him into the tomb and leaves them in the tomb behind the rolled away rock.

The Christ is, therefore, our “Way” to find hope. Hope in a world that seems not to care, even to hate. Hope in a world that runs away from cleansing, purifying, redemptive suffering and prefers to seek the shallow easy paths through life. And they have never worked, have they? You have to go through, not around, not under, not over in order to go on.

That is the promise of Jesus Christ, the Resurrected One, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The Liberator. The Son of Justice.

And so, even as the sands of his own earthly hours began to run out, Dr King was able to stand up that night in 1968 and say that it really doesn't matter now. He'd already stood on the mountaintop. His eyes had already seen the Promised Land. His ears had already heard the promise that we as a people will get to the promised land! He could see the coming of the glory of the Lord of Justice: the balancing of the scales by the Lord of Justice, the appearance of the land of milk and honey of the Lord of Justice, the kingdom where “the first shall be last and the last shall be first” of the Lord of Justice.

Stand there on the mountaintop with Martin this great getting up Easter Sunday, sisters and brothers. Look out at the coming of the Glory of the Lord and see the Promised Land.



CONTACT US

Give us a call for more information about our programs.

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- MAE RUTH FORTE PENNY DRIVE
- AMBASSADORS OF THE WORD YOUTH
- KAPONA DADA - WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
- MASS INTENTIONS
- FR. TONY "VALENTINE" CLARK 7 DAY NOVENA

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MAKING DONATIONS AND PAYMENTS EASIER

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Please mail your check or money order to:

8681 Jaffa Court East Drive, Apt 31, Indianapolis, Indiana 46260



You can also make donations by visiting our website at <https://www.bowmanfrancis.org/> and select the DONATE tab.

BOWMAN FRANCIS MINISTRY ONLINE STORE

The Bowman Francis Team is selling this beautiful t-shirt displaying strong African American women. We are also selling caps. 1 cap is a commemorative cap honoring Fr. Chester Smith and the other is supporting the National Black Catholic Men’s Conference.

If you would like to place an order for this t-shirt, please visit our website at www.bowmanfrancis.org and click on SHOP



FRONT

BACK

Cost: Adult T-shirts \$25.00 add \$2.00 for each additional X.

Size: S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL, XXXXL

Youth T-Shirts \$20.00 Size: YS, YM, YL



\$28.00 for the commemorative cap and \$25.00 for the Men’s Conference



VISIT OUR
ONLINE STORE

COMING EVENTS IN 2021

For more information on these coming events visit our website at www.bowmanfrancis.org

Good Friday Message April 2nd	Easter Message April 4th	Second UBUNTU Talk “Their Eyes Were Watching God” April 13th
National Day of Prayer Message May 6th	Mother’s Day Message & Rosary May 9th	Father’s Day Message June 20th
6 Week Men’s Bible Study June 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, July 7th	National Black Catholic Virtual Men’s Conference October 14th—17th	Thanksgiving Message November 25th
Advent Study December 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd	Christmas Day Message December 25th	Khrist Kwanzaa 7 Principles Reflections December 26th—31st

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to educate, evangelize, empower; and provide an environment for all people to grow spiritually and develop in their spiritual relationship with God. To celebrate our African-American Heritage and the cultural diversity of our universal church.

◆ **Bowman Francis Team:**

(Rites of Passage and Revivals)

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THE BOWMAN-FRANCIS MINISTRY

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

Fr. Charles Smith

Good Friday Message April 2nd

Fr. Ken Hamilton

Easter Sunday Message April 4th

Fr. Ken Hamilton

St. Patrick Livestream Mass April 4th, 18th, 25th

Fr. Charles Smith

Anniversary Mass of Fr. Chester Smith April 8th

Fr. Ken Hamilton

St. Columba Livestream Mass April 11th

Fr. Ken Hamilton

April 13th Second UBUNTU Talk “Their Eyes Were Watching God”

Fr. Charles Smith

Anniversary Ordination Mass April 16th

May

Fr. Ken Hamilton

St. Patrick Livestream Mass May 2nd, 16th, 23rd

Fr. Charles Smith

National Day of Prayer May 6th

Fr. Charles Smith

Mother’s Day Message & Africentric Rosary May 9th

Fr. Ken Hamilton

St. Columba Livestream Mass May 9th

June

Fr. Charles Smith

June 2,9,16,23,30th & July 7th 6 Week Virtual Men’s Bible Study

Fr. Charles Smith

Father’s Day Message & Africentric Rosary June 20th