

Acacia

the annual newsletter of



2024 Year in Review

Issue #3, January 2025

Entering our 35th year!

Colorado Springs Council for Black Catholics (CSCBC)
Diocese of Colorado Springs, CO

In 1990 the Colorado Springs Council for Black Catholics (CSCBC) formed under the direction and endorsement of Bishop Richard C. Hanifen as a council to enhance our identity as Afro-American Catholics doing God's work, and to give one another strength, encouragement, and fellowship. The council is diocese-wide.

As such, we have become involved in several activities which allow us to share in accomplishing our mission more actively and to experience the spiritual growth we continually seek.

In 2022 the council implemented its Junior Membership for individuals 13-17 years old.

We are blessed to be a recipient of a grant from the Black and Indian Mission Office to pursue our evangelization and outreach efforts.

Mission Statement

- † With Christ as our model, provide fellowship and share His word.
- † Share talents as we bring new life into the Catholic church.
- † Provide positive role models.
- † Share resources and network with other organizations to provide services.
- † Advocate for Social Justice issues within the diocese.

Our patron saint is St. Martin de Porres.

Our motto is "**BE SEEN**"

(**B**uilding, **E**nlightening, **S**ervice, **E**ducating, **E**vangelizing, **N**etworking)

Please join us. We would love to have you as a member!

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[CSCBC Facebook](#)

[CSCBC YouTube](#)

Welcome to the 2025 edition of our annual newsletter, “Acacia”, reviewing the CSCBC activities of 2024. It was a year full of traditional council activities as well as a few new ones, especially the inauguration of our quarterly Community Mass.

Evangelization and Outreach

Thanks to the generous grant from the Black and Indian Mission, the council was able to continue and even expand its evangelization and outreach efforts in 2024.

JANUARY

We continued our tradition of providing books related to Catholicism and people of color to all Catholic educational institutions in the diocese from first grade through college level. Three parishes also received books for their parish libraries.

CSCBC was represented at the Black History Month Kickoff sponsored by the African American Historical and Genealogical Society of Colorado Springs.



Pamphlets, prayer cards, and bookmarks were some of the items available to interested attendees.

FEBRUARY blazed in with the Spring "Catholic Fire" for college students at the Newman Center, adjacent to the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

Members attended Mass with the college students in the beautiful chapel. Afterward, everyone gathered in fellowship to enjoy the food provided by the council.



Council members led the Stations of the Cross at St. Francis of Assisi (Colorado Springs). Family members served as candle-bearers.

CSCBC provided St. Martin de Porres prayer cards for elder-care facilities and the diocese prison ministry

MARCH



Led by our spiritual advisor, CSCBC presented in Monument, CO at St. Peter Catholic Church's monthly *Tapping into Theology*. This was a new endeavor for the council.

The subject of the presentation was

"The Contribution of Black and African Catholics – From Little Known African Popes to the Recent Discovery of the Apparent Incorrupt Remains of Sister Mary Wilhelmina Lancaster".

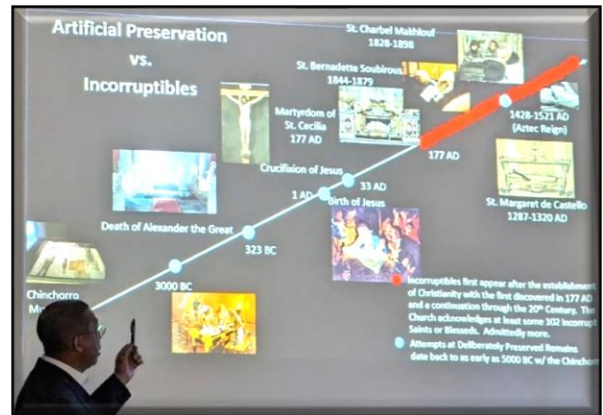
APRIL was a full month for CSCBC:



Members with speaker (second from left)

Some members attended the presentation "People of Action: Black Catholics on the Road to Sainthood" sponsored by Colorado College.

A week later CSCBC gave an abbreviated version of the Tapping into Theology presentation at one of the Air Force Academy's *Special Programs in Religious Education* (SPIRE) programs. SPIRE was also a new activity for the council.



Two members attended the annual Black Catholic weekend retreat in Sedalia, CO.

The month's activities ended with a CSCBC-sponsored Mass with students at Colorado College, followed by dinner and fellowship.

The Fall "Catholic Fire" for college students was held at the Newman Center in **SEPTEMBER**. CSCBC provided refreshments for the students.

NOVEMBER

The Council's annual St. Martin de Porres dinner, offered at no cost to parishioners in honor of our patron saint, was held at St. Mary's Cathedral. The Josephites 2025 African American & Heritage Calendar was distributed during the event.

CSCBC presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the host parish.



Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to our long-time catering staff.



(Not all staff are pictured)

Celebrating Black and African American culture in the Catholic Liturgy

The Community Masses required more planning than anticipated which changed the frequency from every other month to quarterly by the end of the year. A slight disappointment but the good news is there were three Masses in 2024! CSCBC is also trying to form a choir so we can have more black culture in the music selections.

The inaugural Mass was held on July 27, 2024 at Holy Apostles Catholic Church and was live-streamed.



One of the council members, who is also a member of the Knights of Columbus, arranged to have the Knights participate in the Mass. What an honor that one of the regional representatives traveled from Wyoming to join us!

Council members and relatives served as readers, gift-bearers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, and vocalists.





There were approximately fifty congregants at Mass—not bad for the first one! After Mass, CSCBC provided light refreshments for everyone.

The second Mass was also live-streamed from Holy Apostles on September 22, 2024. A council member donated refreshments.

The last Mass of the year was held on December 14, 2024 at St. Joseph Catholic Church. Again, a council member donated refreshments.

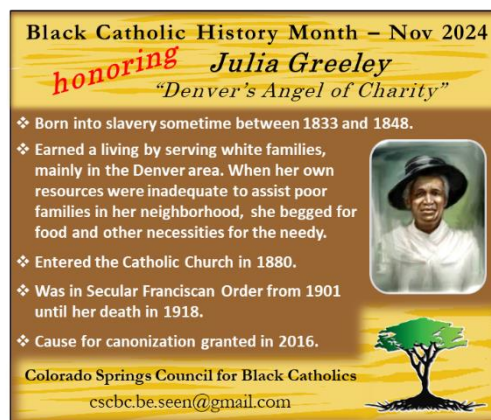
CSCBC is looking forward to the Masses to be held in 2025. Check our website or Facebook for the dates. And don't forget...we're looking for choir members!

Be Informed

The council publishes evangelical and informative ads in the diocese's newspaper, "The Colorado Catholic Herald", and in the Diocesan Directory. Articles written by members are also printed in the Herald.

Ads:

- Black History Month (February) – "African Americans and the Arts"
- Easter (March) – Acts 2:24
- Juneteenth (June) – "Opal Lee: Grandmother of Juneteenth"
- Black Catholic History Month (November) – "Julia Greeley: Denver's Angel of Charity"



Black Catholic History Month – Nov 2024

honoring **Julia Greeley**
"Denver's Angel of Charity"

- ❖ Born into slavery sometime between 1833 and 1848.
- ❖ Earned a living by serving white families, mainly in the Denver area. When her own resources were inadequate to assist poor families in her neighborhood, she begged for food and other necessities for the needy.
- ❖ Entered the Catholic Church in 1880.
- ❖ Was in Secular Franciscan Order from 1901 until her death in 1918.
- ❖ Cause for canonization granted in 2016.

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Printed articles:

- "A Sign of Hope – Sister Mary Wilhelmina Lancaster's apparently incorrupt remains lead to talk of canonization" (February)
- "Julia Greeley Mass will celebrate African American culture" (July)
- "Mother Henriette DeLille – A Legacy of Caring for the Elderly in New Orleans" (November)

Events

"With all vigilance guard your heart, for in it are the sources of life."
Proverbs 4:23, NABRE

In **MAY** our spiritual advisor was ordained into the permanent diaconate. Deacon "C.J." Johnson said that he felt called to serve God and His people, and that a favorite part of the formation process was bringing Christ in the Eucharist to the sick and shut-in.



Catholic Education

CSCBC has always had a particular interest in Catholic education. Almost since its inception in 1990, the council raised money and used donations to assist families with the cost of expenses for their children in Catholic schools. The "St. Martin de Porres Scholarship" was awarded to children if funds were available. In 2019, the scholarship was renamed "The Mary Aurelia De Witt Memorial Scholarship".

The scholarship is independent of any similar programs and requires completing an application and an essay written by the student.

Active fundraising for the scholarship is no longer an option, but the Council is enrolled in the King Soopers (Kroger Company – also includes City Market) Community Rewards Program to help finance the council's scholarship fund.

Consumers link their King Soopers Loyalty Card to CSCBC. When the loyalty card is used when making a purchase, CSCBC will receive a percentage of the purchase from the Kroger Company. In 2024, CSCBC received \$200 from the company for the scholarship fund.

If you are interested in using your King Soopers loyalty card for this fundraising effort, instructions are at this link:

<https://www.diocs.org/Portals/0/DNNGalleryPro/uploads/2024/4/11/KingSoopersRewardPgm.pdf>

Please let CSCBC know if you would like to donate to its scholarship fund so we can ensure the money is credited accurately.

No grant money is used for the scholarship.

In 2024 CSCBC awarded scholarships for the first time since 2019 to:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Jayden L. Jean | 8 th grade, St. Paul Catholic School |
| Ava Garcia | 6 th grade, St. Gabriel Classical Academy |
| Rachel Jaszkwiaak | 7 th grade, St. Gabriel Classical Academy |

The students were presented with their certificates at the St. Martin de Porres dinner in ***NOVEMBER***.



(Jaden Jean is not pictured)

Gratitude

CSCBC appreciates the assistance provided by the Diocese of Colorado Springs, especially Ms. Mary Theresa Thomas. Mary Theresa works on Bishop Golka's staff as the Special Projects Director. She is our primary liaison at the diocese and always has time to respond to our concerns and questions.



For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned.

Romans 12:3

