



# Black History Month

Dear Friend of Annunciation Parish & School,

February is Black History Month. Take some time this month to learn more about the rich contributions of African Americans in the Catholic Church. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have numerous resources at their [site](#).



**Sister Thea Bowman**  
Photo courtesy of Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, [www.fspa.org](http://www.fspa.org)

For example, have you ever heard of Sister Thea Bowman? Sister Thea, the granddaughter of slaves, was born December 29, 1937, in Yazoo City, Mississippi, and she died of cancer in 1990. She had a career as a teacher, and was eventually appointed a consultant for intercultural awareness. A dynamic and charismatic personality, she gave numerous lively presentations and workshops, through which she hoped to build bridges, breaking down racial and cultural barriers. Sister Thea's love of Jesus touched many lives. I was privileged to have met Sister Thea several times and work with her on a catechetical conference. Father Grogan shared with me he also had the opportunity to meet Sister Thea over the years. Did you ever meet her?

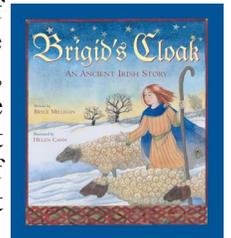
At their November 2018 assembly, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops endorsed the sainthood cause of Sister Thea Bowman. Learn more at the official [website](#) for her canonization cause.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sandi Chakeres,  
Director of Faith Formation

## Saint Brigid's Day - February 1st

February 1st is Saint Brigid's Day. While not a feast on the Universal Roman Calendar, it is certainly a feast day in Ireland where Saint Brigid of Kildare is one of the country's patron saints! Read children the story of "*Brigid's Cloak*" (available at many public libraries), make a St. Brigid's Cross (find directions [here](#)) and enjoy some St. Brigid's oaten bread (find a recipe [here](#).) \*Tips: If you can't easily get rushes for the cross, substitute drinking straws. And if you don't have time to bake the oat bread, substitute store-bought or perhaps even oatmeal cookies.



**FIAT: Faith In Action Today**  
**Annunciation Parish & School**  
**Religious Education/Faith Formation News**  
**Dr. Sandra Chakeres**  
**Director of Faith Formation**  
**513-861-1295**  
[faithformation@annunciationbvmparish.org](mailto:faithformation@annunciationbvmparish.org)  
[www.annunciationbvmparish.org](http://www.annunciationbvmparish.org)  
[www.facebook.com/annunciationbvmparish](https://www.facebook.com/annunciationbvmparish)

### Special points of interest:

- February 5 is the Memorial of [Saint Agatha](#), Virgin and Martyr. She is one of the five female saints depicted in our sanctuary mural here at Annunciation Parish Church!
- The United States Bishops have designated February 7-14 as [National Marriage Week](#).
- Follow us on [Facebook](#) to get all our latest news and see all our latest photos!

\*\*Icon at top left of page: Archangel Gabriel (Annunciation), 16th Century, Russian Heritage, Location: Andrei Rublev Museum in Moscow. Used with permission of St. Isaac of Syria Skete (Orthodox Byzantine Icons, Inc.); 25266 Pilgrims Way, Boscobel, WI 53805 [www.skete.com](http://www.skete.com)

## February 2: The Blessing of Candles at 5:00 p.m. Mass

On February 2nd, forty days after Christmas Day, we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Christians have been celebrating this feast for over 1600 years! A Christian pilgrim to Jerusalem around the year 400 gives an account of the celebration of this feast, complete with a procession with candles.

The Presentation of the Lord is a feast of light. On the fortieth day after his birth, Jesus is brought to the Temple. Here Jesus, the Messiah, meets, or encounters, Simeon and Anna, elderly Jews who had been awaiting the Messiah's birth. You can read the story of this encounter in Luke 2:22-38. Upon taking the infant Jesus into his arms, Simeon praised and blessed God. Simeon's words of blessing (Luke 2:29-32) are a canticle or a song of praise. To this day, around the world, we recall these words of Simeon every night in the Liturgy of the Hours when we pray the Canticle of Simeon at Compline, or Night Prayer.

And every year on February 2nd, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, we recall in a special way that Jesus is the Light of the World when candles are blessed at our Church's liturgy. We then bring some of these candles to our homes for use in prayer throughout the year. This year February 2nd is on a Saturday, and we will celebrate this feast at our 5:00 p.m. Mass. Please join us!



If you want to plan a Saturday Feast Day meal at your home, think about crepes. It has been a tradition in France for centuries to eat crepes on this February 2nd feast day. And in the French city of Marseille, the traditional food for this feast is a boat-shaped cookie/pastry called navettes, French for "little boats." This is again a centuries old tradition, and the pastries are eaten following the candlelight procession!

## Upcoming Events

- ◆ Saturday, February 2, 5:00 p.m. Mass; Celebration of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas); Blessing of, and Procession with, Candles
- ◆ Sunday, February 3: Blessing of Throats at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Masses
- ◆ Tuesday, February 5, 7:30 p.m.: St. Vincent de Paul Conference Meeting
- ◆ Thursday, February 7, 9:30 a.m.: Morning Prayer
- ◆ Thursday, February 7, 7:00 p.m.: Salt & Light Committee meeting
- ◆ Friday, February 8: Kindergarten Round-Up
- ◆ Sunday, February 10, 10:10-10:50 a.m.: Reconciliation Family Preparation
- ◆ Wednesday, February 13, 7:00-8:00 p.m.: Eucharistic Holy Hour
- ◆ Monday, February 18: Presidents' Day; Parish Office & School Closed

***It's Happening at  
Annunciation!***

## February 3: Blessing of Throats

Sunday, February 3rd is the Fourth Sunday in Ordinal Time, but is also a day we remember Saint Blaise. At our Sunday Masses that day (9:00 and 11:00 a.m.), we will celebrate the traditional Blessing of Throats on the Feast of Saint Blaise.

Saint Blaise was the bishop of Sebaste in Armenia in the early 4th century. While little is known of his life, he is believed to have been martyred during the persecution of Christians. Stories about Blaise have long been part of our revered and received Christian tradition. He was said to have been not only a bishop, but also a physician. One story says he miraculously saved a boy who was choking to death on a fish bone. As this story spread, people began praying to Saint Blaise for healing, especially from diseases of the throat. Devotion to Saint Blaise became very popular in the Middle Ages. And to this day, we still celebrate Saint Blaise's Feast Day with the Blessing of Throats.

