



**St. Josephine Bakhita**  
*Feast Day February 8*  
*Canonized - October 2000*

**St. Katharine Drexel**  
*Feast Day March 3*  
*Canonized - October 2000*

# BLACK CATHOLICS IN THE ROCKIES

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## *SAINTLY FORMER SLAVE CHOSEN AS MODEL OF MERCY FOR JUBILEE YEAR*

The Archdiocese of Denver chose Julia Greeley, a former slave, to be the Model of Mercy for the Year of Mercy.

Greeley arrived in Denver in 1874. In spite of her small income of \$10 to \$20 a month she devoted herself to helping anyone in need.

A Catholic convert and daily communicant at Sacred Heart Church in Denver Julia was known as an "Angel of Charity."

Father Blaine Burkey, a Capuchin Franciscan, wrote a historical documentary of Julia Greeley. Along with Deacon Clarence McDavid and Mary Leisring he was featured in a video shown to more than 450 people who attended an Archdiocesan-wide gathering to initiate the Jubilee Year in the Archdiocese of Denver

A highlight of the gathering at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish was the unveiling of a Sacred Image of Julia by Iconographer Vivian Imbruglia. The only photo of Julia which is in black and white, was used to create a magnificent image in color.

Mary L. Leisring, Director  
 Office of Black Catholic Ministry

*SACRED IMAGE—JULIA GREELEY*



Iconographer  
Vivian Imbruglia

**Director's Note**

Mary L. Leisring



As we celebrated the Peace and Justice Mass honoring our martyrs including

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the March for Life the Lord reminds us that all life is sacred and we must hold all these truths to be self-evident. Please continue to pray for all God's children that we live for peace in our world and let this peace begin with you.

**LOCAL NEWS**

The Bosetti Concerts at the Cathedral Basilica

**January 31, 2016**  
3:00—4:00 p.m.

**Stephanie Ann Ball, Soprano**  
**Steven Aquilo-Arbues**  
**Piano**

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**Youth Conference**

**"The Faith Awakened"**

**February 19 & 20, 2016**  
**Fr. Norman Fischer, Director**

Contact Information

Floyd Boyard  
303-343-4627

[fajboyard@yahoo.com](mailto:fajboyard@yahoo.com)

**NATIONAL NEWS**

**July 6-9, 2017**  
**Congress XII**

**Theme:**

**"The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me: Act Justly, Love Goodness, and Walk Humbly with Your God"**  
(cf. Luke 4:18 and Micah 6:8).

**Location:**

Hyatt Regency Orlando  
9801 International Drive,  
Orlando, FL

www.  
[orlandoregencyhyatt.com](http://orlandoregencyhyatt.com)

**DENVER'S SAINTLY WOMAN**  
*Died—Feast of the Sacred Heart—June 7, 1918*

On Friday morning, June 7, 1918, she left her room at 2821 Walnut Street headed for Sacred Heart Church on Larimer Street, just a block away. For years she had made this trip every morning.

Today as she neared the church going along 28th Street, she became ill and went to the home of her friend Carrie Lindblad at 1221 28th Street. Mrs. Lindblad rushed her daughter across the street to the Jesuit residence to fetch a priest[...]

(read the entire article found on page 3 in the book listed below)

**"In Secret Service of the Sacred Heart: The Life & Virtues of Julia Greeley"**

**For a donation of \$20.00 copies can be requested by:**

**Phone:** [303-558-6685](tel:303-558-6685)

**Email:** [juliagreelevguild@gmail.com](mailto:juliagreelevguild@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.juliagreelev.org](http://www.juliagreelev.org)

(Proceeds go to offset publication costs of the book and the work of the guild in promoting Julia).

## *AWARD CELEBRATION—FR. GABRIEL OKAFOR*

On the evening of November 20, 2015 a packed house came to celebrate the recipient of this year's Sts. Bakhita/Drexel Award. Each year the Office of Black Catholic Ministry for the Archdiocese of Denver in Denver, CO honors a person who has been outstanding in serving the Black Catholic and African Communities.

This year's recipient was Father Gabriel Okafor who is currently the Chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital in Denver, CO. Deacon Clarence McDavid, a past recipient of this award, was the Master of Ceremonies. Rev. Msgr. Bernard Schmitz, Vicar for Clergy for the Archdiocese of Denver, presented the award. Numerous clergy joined the evening, including a priest friend from New Orleans

Father Gabriel, who has recently become a United States citizen, was born in Nigeria where he grew up and was ordained a priest in 1999. He has been at St. Joseph's Hospital for seven years.

In addition to the many people who "love" Fr. Gabriel for his priestly ministry at the hospital there are those who attend his monthly Mass at St. Ignatius Loyola Parish.

Since it was impossible to accommodate all those who wanted to attend the award dinner a Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated on the following Sunday, November 22, 2015. The hundreds who attended the Mass were eager to testify to their appreciation of the ministry of Father Gabriel. In his homily, Fr. Linus Nwataral spoke of the priestly ministry of service which is so much apart of Father Gabriel's life.

An interesting part of Fr. Gabriel's life is his relationship to the name of Joseph. His father name was Joseph. He attended St. Joseph school and seminary in Nigeria. When he came to the United States he was appointed to the Chaplaincy of St. Joseph Hospital. In recognition of this connection, Fr. Gabriel was presented with a statue of St. Joseph by the director of the Office of Black Catholic Ministry.

Mary L. Leisring, Director  
Office of Black Catholic Ministry

# AWARD CELEBRATION PHOTOS—FR. GABRIEL OKAFOR



*AWARD CELEBRATION PHOTOS—FR. GABRIEL OKAFOR*



## *A CELEBRATION OF HOPE AND COMMUNION*

Our Lady of Guadalupe, as proclaimed by Pope Pius XII in 1946, is the Patroness of the Americas. More recently, St. Pope John Paul II affirmed Our Lady of Guadalupe as the mother of a vast international family—of one America extending from Tierra del Fuego at the southernmost tip of South America to the northern most reaches of Canada. This vision of honoring Mary as the mother of a united American hemisphere anchors the celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Jesuit parish located at the western boundary of City Park. Within a fragmented world, our celebration of community through an array of liturgical and social events brings us together in a communion of hope and peace, as offered to us in the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe to St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin.

This year, our celebration included a Mass in honor of St. Juan Diego on December 9 and a Vigil Service on December 11 to dramatize the story and message of Our Lady's visits with St. Juan Diego. The three weekend Masses on December 12 and 13 were bilingual (Spanish/English). Our Pastor, Fr. Tom Cwik, S.J., and Associate Pastor, Fr. Carlos Esparza, S.J., led the liturgies. Each Mass was followed by a potluck reception for ongoing fellowship.

Colorful paper flowers handcrafted by parishioners decked the church and added a vibrant ambience to the liturgical space. Alongside the flowers were cards written by parishioners and visitors with special intentions to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Various images of Our Lady provided by members of the parish graced the front of the altar. The centerpieces of these images were a unique painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe commissioned by St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish and a hand-sewn quilt depicting multiple images of Our Lady.

## *A CELEBRATION OF HOPE AND COMMUNION*

The highpoint of the weekend was the liturgy at the Sunday morning 10:00 Mass. Rich, joyous Mariachi music was a highlight of this liturgy. The reception that followed the 10:00 a.m. Mass was a lively potluck lunch that included “lots and lots” of savory dishes, including tamales. The Mariachi added to the festive atmosphere by providing rousing music. Entertainment also included Matlachines dancers, clothed in lavish, ceremonial dress and headgear, dancing to the intoxicating beat of drums. The dance is religious, generally symbolizing the victory of good over evil, and offered in tribute to Our Lady of Guadalupe. The festival was brought to a lively close with two candy-filled piñatas for the younger children.

Our Lady of Guadalupe offers a unifying message and a festive conclusion to our week of Marian devotion beginning with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception liturgies. We celebrate communion that welcomes and reaches out to people of all ages, cultures, ethnicities and experiences. Our celebrations of Mary’s feasts and of St. Juan Diego at St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish are intended to live out Our Lady’s gift of hope and peace.

*Written by  
Tony and Cindy Prado-Gutierrez  
January 5, 2016*

# A CELEBRATION OF HOPE AND COMMUNION



## *Pope Francis' Prayer for Jubilee Year of Mercy*

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved.

Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.

You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy, you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

# SAVE THE DATES

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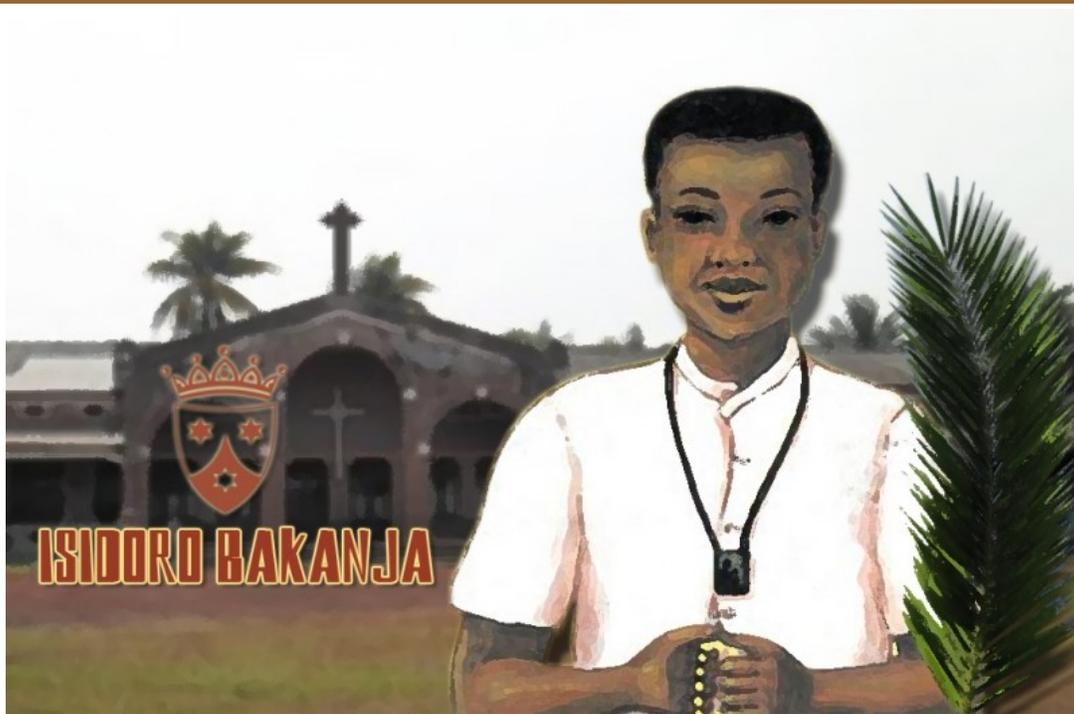
Julia Greeley Pilgrimage  
Sunday, February 21, 2016  
Visit 16 to 18 sites  
connected with Julia and her life  
Limited to 50 people  
Cost: 65.00

Annual Black Catholic Retreat  
**April 8-10, 2016**  
Rev. Manuel Williams, C.R.  
Director  
Sacred Heart Jesuit Retreat House  
Sedalia, CO  
303-688-4198

Feast of the Sacred Heart  
and Honoring Julia Greeley  
**June 10, 2016**  
**7 p.m.**  
Sacred Heart Parish  
2960 Larimer Street

**November 18, 2016**  
Sts. Bakhita/Drexel Recogni-  
tion  
Award Dinner  
Bogeys on the Park

## *Blessed Isidore Bakanja, Martyr (m)*



Bl. Isidore Bakanja, a member of the Boangi tribe, was born in Bokendela (Congo) between 1880 and 1890. In order to survive, even as a boy, he had to work as bricklayer or in farms. He was converted to Christianity in 1906. He was working in a plantation run by a colonialist in Ikili and was forbidden by the owner to spread Christianity among his fellow-workers. On 22 April 1909, the superintendent of the business tore off the Carmelite Scapular, which Isidore was wearing as an expression of his Christian faith, and had him severely beaten even to drawing blood. He died on 15 August of the same year as a result of the wounds inflicted in "punishment" for his faith and which he bore patiently while forgiving his aggressor. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II on 24 April 1994.

Isidore Bakanja worked as an assistant mason for white colonists in what was then the Belgian Congo and later known as Zaire. Convert, baptized 6 May 1906 at age 18 after receiving instruction from Trappist's missionaries. Rosary in hand, he used any chance to share his faith; though untrained, many thought of him as a catechist. He left his native village because there were no fellow Christians.

## *Blessed Isidore Bakanja, Martyr (m)*

He further worked as a domestic on a Belgian rubber plantation. Many of the Belgian agents were atheists who hated missionaries due to their fight for native rights and justice; the agents used the term "mon pere" for anyone associated with religion. Isidore encountered their hatred when he asked leave to go home. The agents refused, and he was ordered to stop teaching fellow workers how to pray: "You'll have the whole village praying and no one will work!" He was told to discard his Carmelite scapular, and when he didn't, he was flogged twice. The second time the agent tore the scapular from Isidore's neck, had him pinned to the ground, and then beaten with over 100 blows with a whip of elephant hide with nails on the end. He was then chained to a single spot 24 hours a day.

Two missionaries who spent several days with him reported that he devoutly received the last sacraments. The missionaries urged Isidore to forgive the agent; he assured them that he already had. "I shall pray for him. When I am in heaven, I shall pray for him very much." After six months of prayer and suffering, he died, rosary in hand and scapular around his neck.

*Order of the Carmelites  
Order of the Brothers of the Most  
Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel*

*PRAYER FOR THE CAUSE OF  
FATHER AUGUSTUS TOLTON*

**O God, we give you thanks for your servant and priest, Father Augustus Tolton, who labored among us in times of contradiction, times that were both beautiful and paradoxical. His ministry helped lay the foundation for a truly Catholic gathering in faith in our time. We stand in the shadow of his ministry. May his life continue to inspire us and imbue us with that confidence and hope that will forge a new evangelization for the Church we love.**

**Father in heaven, Father Tolton's suffering service sheds light upon our sorrows; we see them through the prism of your Son's passion and death. If it be your will, O God, glorify your servant, Father Tolton, by granting the favor I now ask through his intercession, (mention your request), so that all may know the goodness of this priest whose memory looms large in the Church he loved.**

**Complete what you have begun in us that we might work for the fulfillment of your kingdom. Not to us the glory, but glory to you O God, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are God, living and reigning forever and ever. Amen.**

**Bishop Joseph N. Perry  
Imprimatur: Francis Cardinal George, OMI  
Archdiocese of Chicago  
2010**

## INTERNET WEBSITES

**Institute for Black Catholic Studies**

*This is a direct link to Xavier University*

<http://www.xula.edu/ibcs/index.php>

**Black and Indian Mission Office**

[www.blackandindianmission.org](http://www.blackandindianmission.org)

**Eternal World Television Network (EWTN)**

<http://www.ewtn.com>

**Franciscan Handmaids of Mary**

[www.franciscanhandmaidsofmary.org](http://www.franciscanhandmaidsofmary.org)

**"In a Word"**

[www.inaword.com](http://www.inaword.com)

**The Josephites, *Founded in 1893, United States***

[www.josephite.com](http://www.josephite.com)

**Julia Greeley Guild**

[www.juliagreeley.org](http://www.juliagreeley.org)

**Knights and Ladies of Peter Claver**

<http://www.kofpc.org>

**National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life**

[www.blackcatholicsforlife.org](http://www.blackcatholicsforlife.org)

**National Black Catholic Congress**

[www.nbccongress.org](http://www.nbccongress.org)

**Oblate Sisters of Providence, *Founded in 1829, Baltimore, Maryland***

[www.oblatesisters.com](http://www.oblatesisters.com)

**Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, *Founded in 1891, Bensalem, Pennsylvania***

[www.katharinedrexel.org](http://www.katharinedrexel.org)

**Sisters of the Holy Family *Founded in 1842, New Orleans, Louisiana***

[www.sistersoftheholysfamily.com](http://www.sistersoftheholysfamily.com)

**The Society of the Divine Word *Founded in 1875, Stevl, Holland***

[www.divineword.org](http://www.divineword.org)

*OFFICE OF BLACK CATHOLIC MINISTRY  
ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER*

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Jesus Christ calls the African American Community to share the richness and warmth of our ethnicity, cultural values, and deep spirituality with the entire Catholic Community.

We are united with other Catholics by our common faith, shared hope and mutual charity. Our Lord has called us to proclaim the good news and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will answer that call as fully integrated members in the Roman Catholic faith.

Newsletter—*Black Catholics In The Rockies*  
Editor.....Mary L. Leisring

**Contact Information:**

**Mailing Address:**

Office of Black Catholic Ministry  
Archdiocese of Denver  
1300 South Steele Street  
Denver, CO 80210-2599

**Office Location:**

John Paul II Center for the Evangelization  
1300 South Steele Street  
Office #039  
Denver, CO 80210-2599  
303-715-3165

**E-Mail Address:**

[Mary.Leisring@archden.org](mailto:Mary.Leisring@archden.org)

Visit us at <http://www.archden.org/blackcatholicministry>