

African-American Catholic Congregation
Imani Temple on Capitol Hill

Doctrine and Beliefs

Of Spirituality

We believe that Spirituality is a **dynamic**, outgoing, and life-giving process. We believe that as people of African descent, our Spirituality must be African-centered to be authentic. That is, our Spirituality must include an African view of our Deity: God and a genuine proclamation of a Black Messiah, who was born an African Hebrew and who was learned in the wisdom of Ancient Kemet (Egypt). "Joseph got up and took the child and his mother and left that night for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod; to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'Out of Egypt, I have called my Son'" (Matthew 2: 14-15)

We believe in an African Christ who liberated us from sin, suffering, oppression and death; once, and for all, by His Redemptive Act on Calvary, and who continues to liberate the daughters and sons of Africa, and all peoples, today from colonization, exploitation, apartheid and repressive systems of governments.

We believe we must foster a familiarity with our God who is both Mother and Father and who is on the side of the oppressed, the downtrodden and those who are victimized by racism, classism, and sexism. Our Spirituality is liberating in that it is holistic and draws together the whole person in seeking true knowledge of God and self. So, we believe our Spirituality fosters the expression of the total physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual gifts given to us by our Creator.

We believe our Spirituality must be African-centered because "before there was any other history, there was Black history." We believe our Spirituality must be African-centered because it is "Truth." We believe our Spirituality must be African-centered because Africa is the "birthplace" of humanity. Therefore, it is universal Spirituality. So, peoples of all races and cultures can join with us in the celebration and development of our African genius. We believe we are called like our brother Jesus, to see with Black eyes, hear with Black ears, think with Black minds, work with Black hands, and love with Black hearts. So, our mysteries of faith are to be seen in the light of African centered Spirituality .

"God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way; Thou who hast by Thy might, led us into the light, Keep us forever in the path we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee. Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee; Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand, True to our God, True to our native land. (James Weldon Johnson: National Black Hymn)

Of the Mission of The Church

We believe that the Church, as a Community of Baptized believers, must join with Christ in the mission of Liberation. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore, [God] has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the Good News to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind and release to prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the Lord' Rolling up the scroll, Jesus gave it back to the assistant and sat down.... Then He began by saying to them, 'Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.'" (Luke 4:18-21)

With Christ, our Liberator, as our Head, we take unto ourselves His ministry and example. Just as in Christ, there is the abiding hope in abundant life, we are committed to the certainty of life and hope in a world constantly in crisis and torn by tribulation. We believe it is our mission to preach true knowledge of God, of life, of humanity "in spirit and in truth" We understand that a people who do not take control of their own destiny in Jesus' name, moved by the genius of their culture and consciousness, can never achieve full spiritual, economic, cultural, social, political, educational, and psychological maturity. Therefore, we are committed to the movements and struggles of our days in the hope of preserving our tomorrows.

We believe that we are "minds" through which Christ can "think" "hearts" through which Christ can "love" "hands" through which Christ can "serve" We believe that through our commitment to our brothers and sisters, Jesus is enfleshed in us. So, we are the "Living Body of Christ" loving and helping people in the struggle of freedom.

We believe it is our mission "to find a need and fill it... to find a hurt and heal it... to find a problem and solve it... to find a chasm and bridge it... to find somebody who's sick in mind, body, and spirit and lead him/her to healing love... to find somebody who's suffering from sin and oppression and show him/her how he/she is liberated."

Of the Holy Trinity

We believe in One, Loving and True God, Everlasting, of infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness. God is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of all things both visible and invisible. We believe that in the unity of this Godhead, [God] has revealed a Trinity of Persons: of one substance, nature, power and eternity, the Mother-Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We believe that the **central mystery** of our Catholic Faith is the Mystery of the Holy Trinity. That is, there is one God, but three Persons equal in Majesty, undivided in Splendor, yet one Lord, one God ever to be adored.

"Jesus said: 'Full authority has been given to me both in heaven and on earth,. go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them in the name of the [Mother] Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'"(Matthew 28: 18-19)

We believe that while the Mystery of the Holy Trinity may transcend human reason, it is not contrary to it. All the teachings, sacraments, and hopes of the Christian life are directly related to the personal life of the Trinity. That is, the infinite and eternal love, which forever unites three Divine Persons, calls all peoples to share in the life of the Holy Trinity.

We believe that the Mystery of the Holy Trinity reveals not only the essential dignity and self- concept of the Mother-Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but also the distinct essential dignity of each person who is created in the image and likeness of the Triune God. "Then God said, 'Let us make man [woman] in our image, after our likeness.'" (Genesis 1:26).

Of the Creeds

We believe and profess in unity with the Universal Church: the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. We confess the following translations in the AACC:

Apostles Creed:

We believe in God, the Mother-Father, almighty, creator of heaven and earth. We believe in Jesus Christ, the only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Mother-Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, only begotten Son of God - God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God, begotten not made, one in being with God through whom - all things were made both in heaven and on earth. We acknowledge Christ as the True Truth, the Way, and Abundant Life. We believe that Christ is mighty to save and strong to deliver. For all of humankind and for our liberation, [God] came down from the heavens, divested of the... preexistent glory, became flesh, took on the form of a slave, and humbled Himself in obedience.

His birth was the work of the Holy Spirit through the Virgin Mary and He became a person and lived among us. We believe that in the salvific act of Jesus Christ, God radically identified with us -- the transcendent became temporal, the infinite interrupted the finite, and the Beyond entered into our midst. Ours problems are His problems, our sorrows are His sorrows, and our joys are His joys. We believe that Christ being found in the fashion of a person, accepted the will of God for His life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried. On the third day, He arose again according to the Scriptures. He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of God. [God] will come again as promised, to judge the living and the dead, and [God's] kingdom will have no end. We believe that God has highly exalted Him and that at the name of Jesus, every knee must bow and every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God. We believe in the 'Holy Spirit who as our Guide, Inspiration, Comforter, and Giver of Live proceeds from the Mother-' Father and the Son and is worshipped and glorified with them. We believe that when the Holy Spirit is present in our lives we have power to be "stand fast" ... in the liberty wherewith Christ has set us free."

We believe that just as the Holy Spirit has spoken through the prophets, the Holy Spirit is still revealing to all of us anew the will, the way, the witness, and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church as a manifestation of the brotherhood and sisterhood of all people under the Motherhood and Fatherhood of God. We believe in the communion of saints, we acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and we look with joyful hope to the resurrection of the dead and life of the world to come. Amen.

Of the Holy Tradition and Sacred Scripture

We believe there are two main sources of Revelation Holy Tradition and Sacred Scripture. Sacred Scripture is God's Revelation that comes to us through the written word which we call the Bible, under the inspiration of God. We believe that the One and Same God is the author of the Old and New Testaments; that by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the one and same God spoke to the writers of both Testaments.

We accept as our "official translation" of the Bible: The New American Bible (NAB), while other versions may be used, the NAB standard and common version shall be used for all AACC services, documents, etc. We accept the following Books:

Old Testament: Pentateuch: Genesis; Exodus; Leviticus; Numbers; and Deuteronomy. Historical Books: Joshua; Judges; Ruth; 1st Samuel; 2nd Samuel; 1st Kings; 2nd Kings; 1st Chronicles; 2nd Chronicles; Ezra; Nehemiah; Tobit; Judith; Esther; 1st Maccabees; and 2nd Maccabees. Wisdom Books: Job; Psalms; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Songs; Wisdom; and Sirach. Prophetic Books: Isaiah; Jeremiah; Lamentations; Baruch; Ezekiel; Daniel; Hosea; Joel; Amos; Obadiah; Jonah; Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah; and Malachi.

New Testament: Gospels: Matthew; Mark; Luke; and John. Epistles: Romans; 1st Corinthians; 2nd Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; 1st Thessalonians; 2nd Thessalonians; 1st Timotl1y; 2nd Timothy; Titus; Philemon; Hebrews; James; 1st Peter; 2nd Peter; 1st John; 2nd John; 3rd John; and Jude. Books: Acts of t1e Apostles; Revelation.

We believe that Biblical and Historical research shows that since Africa is the Motherland of all humanity, then the "author and finisher of life" would also be at home there. Through linguistics and word studies, it can be proven that the Bible has its roots on African soil and that the people portrayed on its pages are African people. Everyone in the Old Testament was African and no white person appears until mention is made of the Roman occupation. Therefore, we can indeed state, with great boldness, that Sacred Scripture is our story: the story of a people of color.

Sacred Tradition is the handing down of God's Word by the successors of the Apostles. Sacred Tradition contains Divine Revelation and is found principally in the teachings of the early Church Masters and laid down in the decrees of the early Councils of the undivided Church.

We accept the following Councils of the undivided Church in matters of doctrine: The Council of Jerusalem (67 A.D.); The 1st General Council of Nicea (325); The 1st General Council of Constantinople (381); The General Council of Ephesus (431); The General Council of Chalcedon (451); the 2nd General Council of Constantinople (553); the 3rd General Council of Constantinople (680-681); the 2nd General Council of Nicea (787); and the 4th General Council of Constantinople (869-870).

We believe that God spoke through the Tradition of our ancestors in Mother Africa and in Daughter America. We believe we must discover God's voice and presence in our ancestors' heritage, myths, and folk tales, in their songs and dances, in their proverbs and pithy sayings

Of the Holy Qur'an

We believe that with the eyes and hear of a soul filled with love for Jesus Christ and with the search for truth, at] those who undertake the study of the Holy Qur'an (The Holy Book of Islam) and the figure of its prophet will realize that the Lord and His Mercy make their presence felt in the message of the Holy Qur'an and in Mohammed's spirit.

We believe that like the Holy Bible, the entire message of the Holy Qur'an is a recall to God. This call is constantly repeated: "And you will all return to Him" We believe that human life, according to both the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Bible, is nothing else but a "path toward God "

We read in the Holy Qur'an: "In the name of God; the Merciful and the Most Compassionate. Praise be to God; the Lord of all the worlds. The Most Compassionate and the Most Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help. Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors, not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray." (The Opening 1: 1-7)

You should believe in God and His Messenger, and strive hard in God's way with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you, did you know! He will forgive you your Sins and cause you to enter Gardens wherein rivers flow, and goodly dwellings in Garden of Perpetuity -- that is the mighty achievement O you who believe, be helpers in the cause of God; as Jesus, son of Mary, said to the disciples: 'Who are my helpers in the cause of God ', (The Ranks 61:11-12,.14)

We believe that since Islam is really the Abrahamic Mystery of the descendants of Ishmael (Abraham's 1st son). Then it must have an actual, though mysterious, relationship to the Mystery of Christ. We believe that the Holy Qur'an can be interpreted and understood in the light of Christ and of Christian Revelation. Therefore, we accept the Holy Qur'an as a Holy Book of Faith that sheds light and meaning to the Mystery of Life. We believe that the Holy Qur'an shares with us true knowledge of God and self.

Of Mary, Our Blessed Mother

We believe that just as we, people of African descent, understand the profound love and respect we have for our Mothers, so we cannot come to a full understanding of the Mystery of Christ and the Church without a profound love, respect and knowledge of Mary, the Mother of our Liberator and ourselves. We honor and respect Mary because of her great role in God's plan of liberation. We believe she is truly the Mother of God through the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit and without the loss of virginity. We believe she is distinguished from the rest of humankind by her Immaculate Conception, that is, freedom from Original Sin, by her fullness of Grace, and by complete sinlessness. We believe she is the Mediatrix of Grace merited by Christ.

We believe she assumed body and soul into Heaven. We believe with St. Augustine that Mary is "clearly the Mother of the members of Christ... since she cooperated out of love so that there might be born in the Church the faithful, who are members of Christ their Head" Even being Jesus' natural mother would have had no spiritual significance for Mary if she had not borne Jesus before in her heart. We believe, therefore, that spiritual relationship with Jesus belongs to all who submit their lives and wills to the care of God. Thus, Mary's outstanding faith gives her natural Motherhood of Jesus a deep meaning in liberation victory, a meaning that justifies speaking of her "Spiritual Motherhood" of all peoples.

"Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his Mother: "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed - and you yourself shall be pierced with a

sword -- so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare." (Luke 2:33-35)

“Near the cross of Jesus, there stood His Mother... Seeing His Mother there with the disciples whom He loved; Jesus said to His Mother, 'Woman, there is your son.' In turn, He said to the disciple, 'There is Your Mother. ', (John 19:25-27)

Our Blessed Mother, who was of African descent, and who saw her own flesh and blood on die for the rest of her children is indeed an example to all of us as we face tribulations. She is indeed "Mother of the Streets" and "Protectress of the Oppressed"

Throughout the history of the Historic Catholic Church, Mary has been given honor and respect because of her total obedience in submitting her life and will to the care of God. So, as members of the African American Catholic Congregation, we proclaim: "Hail Mary, full of grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God; pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of death. Amen

"Then Mary said: My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit finds joy in God my Savior, For {God } has looked upon [Thy] servant in her lowliness; all ages to come shall call me blessed God who mighty has done great things for me, holy is {God's] name; {God's] Mercy is from age to age on those who fear {God}. {God] has shown might; [God] has confused the proud in their inmost -thoughts. {God] has deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places. The hungry [God] has given every good thing, .while the rich {God] has sent empty away. [God] has upheld Israel [Thy] servant, ever mindful of {God's] mercy; Even as {God] promised our foreparents, promised Abraham and his descendants forever. ", (Luke 1: 46-55)

Of the Catholic Church

We believe one is Catholic by virtue of his/her relationship to Jesus Christ through the Historic Catholic Church holds the central Christian Faith, as defined by Revelation, the early Church Teachers~ and the early Councils of the undivided Church, and has the ancient and universal ministry and sacraments, and uses the ancient ritual in all its essentials. Therefore, to be an authentic Catholic, Church, a community must be able to trace its Apostolic Succession back to the original Apostles.

The Most Rev. G. Augustus Stallings, Jr., 1st Bishop and Founder of the African-American Catholic Congregation was validly ordained a Roman Catholic Priest on July 20, 1974 by Archbishop William Wakefield Baum and validly consecrated a Bishop by Archbishop Richard W. Bridges, as main Consecrator with Co-Consecrators: Bishops Michael Marshall, Wayne Ellis, Karl Barwin, and Jurgen Bless. All were from either the Old Catholic Church out of Utrecht, Independent Catholic Church of the Philippines, German Old Catholic Church in the United State of America, or the Orthodox Old Catholic Church. All had valid lines of Apostolic Succession. Therefore, the African American Catholic Congregation is an authentic and valid Catholic Church.

We believe the Church is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. We believe it is One because it is one Body under one Head, our Liberator and Lord, Jesus Christ. We believe it is Holy because the Holy Spirit dwells in it, consecrates its members and guides them to do God's work. We believe it is Catholic because it proclaims the Universal Faith to all people to the end of time, and expresses the faith of the ancient creeds. We believe it is Apostolic because it continues in the teachings and fellowship of the Apostles and is sent to carry our Christ's mission to all people.

Of the Mission of The Church

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Of the Nguzo Saba

We believe as a people redeemed by the Blood of Jesus, we are called to live out that liberation as a KWANZAA PEOPLE. We believe that the NGUZU Saba (the seven principles/values) of which the African American's Holiday Kwanzaa is based is projected as a minimum moral set of African values that we need in order to rebuild and strengthen the family, community, culture and Church. Through the daily living of these values, we become a self-conscious force in the struggle to control our destiny.

We believe that as a people deeply rooted in our culture, we will be able, with Jesus, to break the chains of suffering, oppression, and death. We believe that as we re-affirm and re-store our authentic African heritage and culture, we will realize True Liberation:

(Unity): "to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, race and humanity. " ('That all may be one as' you, Mother-Father, are in me, and I in you...I pray that they be one in us. "John 17:21)

(Self-Determination): "to define ourselves, name ourselves and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named and spoken for by others." ("When God, in the beginning, - created man and woman, God made [them) subject to [their) own free choice...Sirach 15: 14)

UJIMA (Collective Work and Responsibility): "to build together and maintain our community together and to make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together and to

celebrate our brothers' and sisters' joys." ("make my joy complete by your unanimity, possessing the one love, united in spirit and ideals. Never act out of rivalry or conceit... rather, let all parties think humbly of others and superior to themselves, each of you looking to others' interests rather than to [thy] own." Philippians 2:2-4)

UJAMMA (Co-Operative Economics): "to build and maintain our own stores shops, institutions and other businesses and to profit together from them." ("that though Jesus was rich, yet He for your sakes became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich... For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened...but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, 'that their abundance also may supply your lack be equality- that there may be equality." 2nd Corinthians 8:9, 13-14)

NIA (Purpose) "to make as our collective vocation, the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness." (And to some, His gift was that they should be apostles; to some, pastors and teachers; so that the saints together make a unity in the work of service, building up the Body of Christ. In this way, we are all to come to unity in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God until we come the perfect Person, fully mature with the fullness of Christ Himself" Ephesians 4:11-13)

KUUMBA (Creativity): "to do always as much as we can, in the way we can in order to leave community more beautiful than we inherited it. " ("They gathered their brothers [sisters] together, then sanctified themselves, and in accordance with the Words of Yahweh, they began purifying the Temple of Yahweh." 2nd Corinthians 29:15)

IMANI (Faith): "to believe with all our hearts, minds, and spirits in our parents, teachers, leaders, our people and our God and the righteousness and victory of our struggle." "Faith is confident assurance, concerning what we hope for, and conviction about things we do not see." (Hebrews 1:1-2)

Of the Sacraments

We believe Sacraments are great signs and symbols of God's love, grace and power within us, and God is made real. We believe there are seven sacraments that were instituted by Christ and given to the Church to celebrate "in spirit and in truth": Sacraments of Christian Initiation - Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist; Sacraments of Healing - Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick; Sacraments of Commitment - Marriage and Holy Orders. They are necessary for true and authentic liberation from sin, suffering, oppression and death.

We believe the Sacraments are the vehicles of Grace, which they convey. They are validly celebrated by the carrying out of the sign with the proper intention. Not all are equally qualified to administer all the Sacraments. The validity of the Sacrament is independent of the worthiness of the minister.

We believe that the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) bring us to the full stature of Christ and enables us to carried out the Mission of the Church, ideally, that these Sacraments should be celebrated at the same time.

Of Grace

We believe Jesus came to give us "life:" a life richer than any we could have otherwise. The new "life" fulfills our deepest longings and makes our broken lives authentically human. We believe that this newness of life involves both a healing and an elevation to a sharing in divine life. Through this new life, we are called to a true friendship with the Trinity, to share in the very nature of God, and to live on earth in a divine way, sharing God's knowledge in unshakable faith, and sharing in God's inmost life by the gift of His love. This reality we call "Grace." We believe that "Grace" is God's gift towards us, unearned and undeserved; by Grace, God forgives our sins, enlightens our minds, stirs our hearts, and strengthens our will. "I came that they might have life and have it abundantly." (John 10: 10)

"All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God You did not receive a spirit of slavery leading you back into fear, but a spirit of adoption through which we cry out Abba!' (that is Father). The Spirit... bears witness with our spirit that we are children, we are heirs as well..." (Romans 8:14-17)

We believe Grace liberates and that it gives true freedom. Grace is not forced on us, but is offered to us. We believe that it gives us abilities to do like the Prophet Micah said in Chapter 6, Verse 8: "You have been told O people, what is good and what the Lord requires of you: Only to do right and to love goodness and to walk humbly with your God."

We believe God desires for the true and total liberation of all peoples. We believe no one is predestined to evil or a life of colonization, exploitation, apartheid or oppression. We believe as human beings, we are all capable of believing, trusting and loving others. We believe Grace transforms these ways we relate to others into the gifts of faith, hope and love: capacities to relate to God and others as one of His dearly loved sons and daughters. "Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ" (John 17:3)

Of Our Basic Commitments

We believe as disciples of Jesus Christ, who is the Word made flesh and dwelling among, we must offer our thoughts and deeds to God who is all powerful and loving. We are fully committed to sharing God's Word, Work, Witness, Spirituality, and Strength with all of humanity by living and moving with love and kindness:

To Our Members: We will provide spiritual growth and development. The Kingdom of God on earth is the sovereign reward for the accomplishment of every aspect of our ministries. We are fully committed to the teachings of the Word of God as revealed in the Holy Bible, the Holy Qur'an, and the teachings of our ancestors.

To Each Other: Each of us is entitled to and will be treated with dignity and respect. We will deal fairly and openly with each other as individuals and provide encouragement to promote each individual's talents. Each of us must act with integrity and adhere to the highest standards of Christian values and teachings.

To Others: We will respect and speak honorably of our fellow brothers and sisters who are not members of the AACC for we are all on the same accord in the struggle for eternal life in the Kingdom of God. We will be a responsible spiritual family in the communities of the children of God.

To Humanity and Excellence: Human Dignity is the most basic principle governing relationships between people. Compassion and understanding must be present in the conduct of every ministry undertaken by our Congregation. We are committed to the full nature and mature growth of every

person. We will, at all times, remain committed to the relevance of excellence in our homes, in our Temple, on our jobs, and in all things that we do individually and collectively.

To Growth and Tithing: We will consistently increase our tithes and offerings in order to maintain financial solvency. We will grow profitably in order to meet our responsibilities to our members, staff, priests, deacons, bishops, and others with whom we do business.

To Our Community: We will strive to provide our community with consistently superior rolemodels measured against the teachings of the laws of God and governed by the Holy Spirit. Christian behavior will be present in every aspect of our daily lives.

We believe the AACC is "The House built on Faith, Truth, Strength, and Love." As we grow, as we put additions onto that House, each of us must exercise great care not to give less attention to the foundation of faith than did our ancestors. "For Faith is the substance of thing, hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1-2)

Of Creation

We believe that before there was History, there was Black History! We believe God, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come, created the whole world, visible and invisible, out of nothing: not from eternity, but from the beginning of time in order to share God's Goodness, for God's Glory, and for the sanctification of all peoples.

"In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty windswept over the waters." (Genesis 1:1-2)

"Through [God] all things came into being and apart from [God] nothing came to be. Whatever came to be in [God] found life, the life for the light of men [women]." (John 1:3-4)

We believe all that is created is of God and that God guides the world by Providence. We believe that everyone has his/her own spiritual soul created by God at conception, and that it is free, immortal, in the form of the body. We believe that our father Adam was filled with God's living grace at the moment of creation was not subject to death and free of concupiscence. We believe these gifts were freely given by our Most Merciful and Most Gracious God, for they were not owed to human nature.

We believe all creatures share in the "Negritude" of God.

Of Membership

We believe if someone is searching for a Church home that believes in the Power of God, in the Mercy of God, in the Power of Positive-thinking, is Africentric in vision and mission, cares about healing hurting people, is involved in the struggle of liberation and cries out like the slaves of old: "Guide me O' thou Great Jehovah, I am weak, but thou art mighty," then the African American Catholic Congregation is the place for him/her.

We believe membership in the African American Catholic Congregation is to be opened to all men and women of all races and cultures who desire to walk the way of the African Christ in the development, formation and celebration of the African genius. In the spirit of our African genius we as an "extended family" consist of:

Professed Members: those individuals who have been formally received by the Pastor of the local Temple as members of the AACC through a "Profession of Faith" or Baptism.

Interested Members: those individuals who have an expressed interest in membership and are prayerfully involved in our "Members Orientation Process."

Associate Members: those individuals who are supportive of the mission and vision of the AACC, pray for us, celebrate with us, are committed with us to the movements and struggles of our days in the hope of preserving our tomorrows, but remain members of their own denomination; and

Watch-Care Members: those individuals who are in a city where there is a Temple and are there for a short period of time and wish to have a Church Home until they return to their regular home.

"Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourself s with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievance you have against one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. Over all these virtues, put on love, which binds the rest together and make them perfect. Christ's peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns, and inspired songs. Whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Mother-Father through God." (Colossians 3:12-17)