



Metro/Religion

African American influence to be explored at encuentro 2000

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The influence of African Americans in the Catholic Church in the United States will be explored at Encuentro 2000, "Many Faces in God's House".

Encuentro 2000 will take place at the Los Angeles Convention Center, July 6-9. The event is the key jubilee gathering for the Catholic Church in the United States and is being hosted by the Hispanic community for all ethnic groups in the nation.

Encuentro 2000 will showcase the West Coast premiere of Enduring Faith, a 90-minute documentary that examines the struggle to establish an African American clergy in the Catholic Church. Encuentro 2000 also will feature workshops led by African Americans, including a

Sunday morning presentation by Bishop's Curtis J. Guillory, SVD, auxiliary bishop of Galveston-Houston and a member of the Bishop's Committee for African Americans Catholics.

The African American experience also will be highlighted in Encuentro's global village, which will include a site from an Afrocentric perspective. The convention center also will feature several prayer spaces reflecting various ethnic traditions, including a shrine to Our Mother of Africa.

Bishop Guillory, a member of the bishops Subcommittee for Encuentro 2000, noted the importance of African American participation in this national event. The African American community has been a vital part of the Church in the United States since the 1500's. The Catholic Church is a community of people with a shared

faith and a shared tradition," Bishop Guillory said. "African American Catholics take pride in Catholic Church more..."

An estimated four percent of U.S. Catholics, about 2.5 million people, are African American. The largest number of Africans live in the archdioceses of New Orleans, Brooklyn, Chicago, Washington, Lafayette, La, Baltimore, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Houston and Louisville, Ky.

Nine percent of the African American in the United States are Catholic. African American groups sponsoring Encuentro 2000 include Knights of Peter Claver - Ladies Auxiliary, National Association for Black Catholic Administrators, National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, the National Black Catholic Congress, and the National Black Sisters' Conference.

NCC moves toward a bigger Christian tent

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The National Council of Churches is going to try to form a new organization that would for the first time include all major branches of U.S. Christianity, its board decided Tuesday.

If successful, the new ecumenical body could spell an end to the council, which is now made up of mainline Protestant, black Protestant and Orthodox denominations.

Most Christians in the United States are currently outside the council, in the Roman Catholic Church and in Evangelical or Pentecostal groups.

Under the purposely vague plan approved by the 50-member council board, a task force will hold preliminary talks with Catholic, Evangelical and Pentecostal leaders, invite them into a joint process and propose next steps to the council's national assembly in November. The project faces numerous obstacles, both ideological and practical.

Conservative Protestants, Evangelicals, Pentecostals and Southern Baptists, have been indifferent or hostile toward the council, often accusing it of

theological liberalism and promoting political causes to the neglect of spiritual ones.

The U.S. Catholic Church decided a generation ago not to enter the council, partly because Roman Catholics in this country alone exceed the 50 million members in the council's 35 denominations.

However, since the Second Vatican Council, Catholic bishops have been free to join cooperative bodies with other Christians and have done so in 55 other countries.

Participants at the council's 50th anniversary meeting last November said it was time to give birth to a new ecumenical future, noted the Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, chief executive of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a current National Council member.

"I find this extremely helpful and hopeful," he said of the proposal. The future existence of the council was not discussed by the board.

"Sometimes an organizational structure has to be willing to die. We have to be willing to entertain that," said the Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, chief executive of the Reformed Church in America, part of

the task force that will contact the other Christian groups.

The Rev. Robert Edgar, the council's chief executive, sent notice of the proposal two weeks ago to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Association of Evangelicals. He plans an early meeting with the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest U.S. Protestant denomination.

In another action at the council board meeting, officials settled a major internal dispute, granting independent financial control to its relief agency, Church World Service. The agency, which brings in 85 percent of council revenues, has been dissatisfied with the cost and quality of council administration. It was during discussions of the Church World Service problem that the idea of a new pan-Christian group first arose.

The council has struggled through a period of financial turmoil. Following a \$4 million budget deficit for 1999, Edgar expressed confidence that anticipated special gifts, staff cuts and other economies would stabilize finances by the end of 2000.

New Christian worship music site hits the web

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

EMF Broadcasting, K-LOVE Radio's parent organization, has launched World Wide, an all-worship Christian music show on the Internet. Portland residents can now hear great worship music 24 hours a day from artists such as Delirious, Darrell Evans, Sonicflood and Rebecca St. James at worldwideworship.com.

The format of World Wide Worship is designed to be interactive, bringing listeners into the presence of God. Just as music plays a vital role within the church, World Wide Worship will be a source of inspiration and renewal for listeners.

The goal of World Wide Worship is to create a listening experience that will positively impact people's lives, said K-LOVE midday announcer David Pierce, who helped to produce the new site. The songs selected create an overall theme, he said, taking the listeners on a journey.

EMF Broadcasting is a nonprofit Christian ministry that strives to present the gospel message in a straightforward manner through contemporary Christian music. An EMF network, K-Love Radio plays contemporary Christian music 24 hours a day at 88.7 FM, 96.3 FM and 1040 AM in Portland.

Check out the new worship site at www.worldwideworship.com or via link from the K-LOVE Web site at

www.klove.com EMF invites listeners can comment on the new site by e-mail at info@worldwideworship.com.

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