



PRESS RELEASE

June 19, 2022

Contact: Maria Aselage, Director of Media Relations
(843) 513-7605 ~ maria@charlestdiocese.org

Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston marks Juneteenth

(CHARLESTON, SC) – As the country observes Juneteenth, the Most Reverend Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS, Bishop of Charleston, is encouraging all people of faith to embrace each other, build diverse communities and work together toward Christian justice. “As we commemorate the day on which slavery officially ended in the United States, let us recommit ourselves to engaging in dialogue about our similarities and differences – all of which are God-given,” said Bishop Fabre, the first Haitian bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston. “Having a respectful and honest conversation will allow us to have a better understanding of each other as we work together to build up the Kingdom of God.”

[Black Catholics have played an important role in the history of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston](#). Part of that history includes several visits from Sister Thea Bowman, the only African American member of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration who is on the path toward sainthood. Bowman gave several presentations around the diocese in the late 1970s and 1980s. She combined singing, prayer, and storytelling with the goal of breaking down racial and cultural barriers. Like Bishop Fabre, she also encouraged people to communicate with each other to better understand cultures and races. Cancer took her life in 1990. [A documentary about Sister Bowman](#), her vocation, and her work will be released this fall.

Currently, the diocese has 12 historically Black parishes and two historically Black elementary schools. Additionally, it has had an office that evangelizes to the Black community for over 30 years. The office strives to build up the Church community by offering opportunities for dialogue on race and inclusion initiatives.

“Even after we commemorate this important holiday, our efforts must continue. Each day, we must work together to achieve racial harmony and enhance the life and dignity of every person,” said Bishop Fabre.

About the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston

Founded in 1820, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston is comprised of 117 parishes and missions, 350,000 people, and encompasses the state of South Carolina.

###