



Union of Black Episcopalians

Bishop John T. Walker National Learning Center
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Washington, DC 20011
www.ube.org

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Dear UBE Members & Friends,

We are proud to announce the 2015 UBE Award categories honoring three pioneers in our community the Rev. Pauli Murray, the Rt. Rev. Quinton Primo and the Rt. Rev. Walter Dennis.

The award criteria and history of these pioneers are described below.

Nominations are due by Feb 28, 2015. The UBE Executive committee will make the final selections and announce by April 2015.

Please send nominations to Dianne Smith, UBE National Secretary
diannsmith@theube.org

Faithfully,

Canon Annette L. Buchanan
UBE National President

The Rt. Rev. Nathan Baxter
UBE Honorary Chair

The Reverend Dr. Anna Pauline "Pauli" Murray Award for Life-Long Excellence in the Ministry of Civil Rights and Activism



Criteria:

This award acknowledges the extraordinary life of faith, personal integrity and public witness of the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray. From her youth until her death she was courageous in crossing unjust barriers, setting social and institutional precedence for inclusion by her great skill as a legal and civil rights scholar, a theologian. Additionally she is admired for her courage in risking her very life to claim her place as a woman, African American and lesbian in the larger society and the Church. This award recognizes persons who demonstrate a life long commitment through scholarship, activism, ministry and personal integrity and risk in the work for civil rights. The awardee would be someone who, while grounded in the life of the Church and the Christian faith, has made their greatest impact outside the institutional Church (e.g. law, politics, scholarship, legislation, community activism).

Biography:

Dr. Murray was the first black woman to be ordained as an Episcopal Priest in 1973. She was educated at Hunter College (BA), Law Schools of Howard University and University of California, Berkley (LLM); Yale Law School (JSD); General Theological Seminary (M.Div.). Her gifts served society and the Church as university administrator, college professor, international legal scholar, and civil rights activist, model of courage and parish priest devoted to the sick and shut-in.

As a lawyer, Murray argued for civil rights and women's rights. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Chief Counsel Thurgood Marshall called

Murray's 1950 book *States' Laws on Race and Color* the "bible" of the civil rights movement. Murray served on the 1961 Presidential Commission on the Status of Women and in 1966 was a co-founder of the National Organization for Women. Ruth Bader Ginsburg later named Murray a coauthor on a brief for *Reed v. Reed* in recognition of her pioneering work on gender discrimination. Murray held faculty or administrative positions at the Ghana School of Law, Benedict College, and Brandeis University.

Murray struggled with issues related to her sexual and gender identity, describing herself as having an "inverted sex instinct". But she would not let the gift of her different sexuality "closet" her. In 1940, Murray was arrested with a friend for violating Virginia segregation laws after they sat in the whites-only section of a bus. This incident, and her subsequent involvement with the socialist Workers' Defense League, inspired her to become a civil rights lawyer, and she enrolled at Howard University. During her years at Howard, she became increasingly aware of sexism, which she called "Jane Crow", the sister of the Jim Crow racial segregation laws. Murray graduated first in her class, but was denied the chance to do further work at Howard University because of her gender and possibly her sexual orientation. In 1965 she became the first African American to receive a J.S.D. from Yale Law School.

She once said of her struggle for selfhood and work for civil rights:
"Seeing the relationship between my personal cause and the universal cause of freedom released me from a sense of isolation, helped me to rid myself of vestiges of shame over my racial history, and gave me an unequivocal understanding that equality of treatment was my birthright and not something to be earned. I would be no less afraid to challenge the system of racial segregation, but the heightened significance of my cause would impel me to act in spite of my fears."

Dr. Murray also influenced and established life-long friendships with many prominent American leaders such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Eleanor Roosevelt considered Murray a personal friend and companion in the work for civil rights. Murray became active in the case of Odell Waller, a black Virginia sharecropper sentenced to death for killing his white landlord. She wrote to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt on Waller's behalf. Roosevelt in turn wrote to Virginia Governor asking him to guarantee that the trial was fair, and later persuaded the president to privately request that the death sentence be commuted. Through this correspondence, Murray and Roosevelt began a friendship that would last until the First Lady's death two decades later. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Ginsberg was also an admired and considered Murray an intellectual colleague. When lawyer and future Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote her brief for *Reed v. Reed*—a 1971 Supreme Court case that for the first time extended the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause to women—she added Murray as a coauthor in recognition of her debt to their work.

Faith was always part of Pauli Murray's life and this was recognized by the Episcopal Church when she was ordained in 1977 and called to serve as pastoral assistant in two congregations until her death in 1985. Believing that her life long courage and service---lay and ordained, evidenced rootedness in the Christian faith the 2012 the General

Convention acted to include her in the book of Holy Women, Holy Women as a modern day saint.

The Bishop Quintin Ebenezer Primo Award for Extraordinary Faithfulness in Pastoral and Prophetic Leadership in Ministry



Criteria:

This award acknowledges the extraordinary witness of Bishop Quintin E. Primo, Jr. as a pastoral healer, reconciler and advocate for justice ministries at all levels of Church life (from local community to larger Church). The award recognizes persons, lay or ordained, whose ministry demonstrates excellence in: passion for and effectiveness in building diverse community (e.g. racial, economic, social, gender, sexuality); faithful demonstration of Christian courage and grace when facing strong opposition to such witness; pastoral wisdom in speaking truth to the Church and to society; and “prophetic effectiveness” (i.e. programs which witness love and justice of God and not simply social reaction to need) in advancing caring ministries to the least and neediest, locally and/or beyond.

Biography:

Bishop Primo was first to serve in many areas including the first president of the National Union of Black Episcopalians; the first black bishop of Chicago; the first bishop to ordain women priests in that diocese; and the first black Episcopal bishop in the Diocese of Delaware. Bishop Primo was educated at Lincoln University (BA), Bishop Payne Divinity School (STB), and Virginia Seminary (M.Div.).

Early in his ministry Bishop Primo was determined his would be a ministry of inclusion. As an advocate for the advancement of minorities in the church and American society, Primo championed the equal treatment of black clergy and the inclusion of all racial minorities within congregations. His outspoken support of women's ordination led him to become the first bishop to ordain women as priests in Chicago. He was a strong and articulate defender of a fellow bishop who ordained a non-celibate gay man. With humor and pastoral grace Bishop Primo championed the cause of peace, social justice, race relations and reconciliation in the Church and society.

Primo's service to the greater Episcopal Church exemplified a commitment to equality and justice that matched his pastoral care. He served as Episcopal voting representative for Project Equality of Delmarva, as chairman-treasurer for the Ad Hoc National Clergy Committee to remove discriminatory hiring and personnel practices in the Episcopal Church, and with the Episcopal Action Group on Poverty of the Episcopal Church. Primo also committed many years to the Living Church Foundation. He held elected deputy and alternate positions to General Convention from 1952 to 1969.

In his bold resoluteness to effect change for civil rights, he led approximately half the black clergy in 1967 to sign "A Declaration by Priests who are Negroes," which confronted the discrimination of black clergy within the church, particularly in terms of how rarely African American clergy advanced to executive positions, and the lack of recognition for their contributions to urban and racial work. The following year, Primo advanced his efforts in this area and co-founded the Union of Black Clergy and Laymen (UBCL), which continued to speak out on racial discrimination affecting black priests and present in policy making. Primo served as the first national president of this group of African American clergy and laity. The Union initially explored the option for black clergy and congregations to leave the Episcopal Church and revive the African Orthodox Church. Ultimately, the Union inherited the role of ESCRU, and evolved to represent the black voice within the Episcopal Church and was renamed the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) in 1971.

His contributions extended beyond the church walls with the establishment of St. Michael's Day Nursery, St. Matthew's Tutorial and Job Training Program, and as co-founder of the Community Training Foundation, Inc. During his tenure as rector at St.

Matthew in Detroit from 1969 to 1972, Primo successfully merged St. Matthew, a predominantly black congregation, with St. Joseph, a predominantly white congregation at a time of acute racial division.

Primo's civic commitments impacted a broad spectrum of American society. He served as a commission member under Governor Terry of Delaware and as a board member for the Wilmington Council of Churches, United Negro College Fund, Planned Parenthood of Wilmington, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. The Urban Center of St. Barnabas, co-founded by Primo in 1979, served as a Chicago-based community outreach center, and evolved into the Quintin E. Primo Endowment Fund at St. Augustine College in Raleigh, North Carolina. The Primo Women's Center was established in 1997 as a shelter for homeless women and children in Chicago, offering after-school and job-training programs. The Center is now chaired by his son, Quintin E. Primo III. The Quintin E. Primo, Jr. Fund for Racial Justice sponsors programs to continue his commitment to dialogue on racial equality.

The Bishop Walter Decoster Dennis Award for Canonical and Ecclesiastical Leadership



Criteria:

This award acknowledges the contributions of persons who demonstrate significant contributions to the development, interpretation and identity of the Church, especially through its canons and its institutional mission. This award may acknowledge a member of General Convention (House of Deputies/House of Bishops); member of General Convention Committees related to Constitutions and Canons; the articulation or shaping of Church identity and ministry; or as a legal or legislative advocate (or advocate group) whose work contributes significantly to advancing of the Ecclesiastical health of the church, its structure, identity and missional understanding as an institution. Particular attention will be given to what advances the ordering of the Church as equitable and just in its Ecclesiastical identity, witness and order.

Biography:

The award honors the Rt. Rev. Walter Decoster Dennis----priest, lawyer, professor of Constitutional Law and History, and Suffragan Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York (1979-1998). Educated at Virginia State University (BA), N.Y. University Law School (LLM), and General Theological Seminary (S.T.B.) he was intellectually disciplined and politically astute. Before his election as bishop he served the Cathedral of St. John the Divine as a Canon Residentiary (1965-1979), and as vicar of St. Cyprian's Church, Hampton, Va. (1960-1965). Bishop Dennis was a founding member of the Union of Black Episcopalians.

Bishop Dennis is remembered for his pastoral nature and warm manner. He is also remembered as a trailblazer, mostly in race relations and legal issues. Bishop Dennis was deeply committed to civil rights, with a lifelong commitment to justice and peace, evidenced by a range of activities from giving aid to the freedom riders to founding organizations whose goals were the pursuit of equality.

One example of how his pastoral and legal passions blended is that he was one of the Episcopal lawyers and clergy who formed the Guild of St. Ives, taking their name from a 14th century Breton saint known in his own time as "advocate of the poor." The purpose

of the Guild of St. Ives is to give legal assistance with a "pastoral dimension" to Episcopalians in canon or civil law. The Episcopal New Yorker reported in April 1966, "The formation of the Guild has been spearheaded by the Rev. Canon Walter D. Dennis. Canon Dennis said he envisioned the organization as a place to which church people without recourse to other help could turn 'for an advisory opinion' in legal matters relation to areas of Church concerns." The Guild of St. Ives is still an active organization.

Perhaps his most significant contribution to the Church is "the Dennis Canon", which is a common name used for Title I.7.4 of the Canons of the Episcopal. The Canon seeks to impose a trust, in favor of The Episcopal Church, on property held by a local group of Episcopal adherents (whether a parish, mission, or congregation). The Canon's intended effect is to discourage a local group from withdrawing from TEC, as under the Dennis Canon such property would revert to TEC.

In light of the larger doctrinal controversies surrounding TEC, and the decision of some local congregations (and dioceses) to withdraw from TEC, the Canon has surfaced in litigation between church or diocese factions regarding ownership of property.

The Canon is informally named after Dennis who drafted the Canon. It was passed by the 66th General Convention in 1979, having been introduced by the Committee on Canons of the House of Bishops as D-024 of that Convention. He was chairman of the Church's Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons in 1982 and continued his work with that board until 1994.