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## NATIONAL BLACK CATHOLIC CONGRESS XII CONCLUDES WITH COMMITMENT TO PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The theme of Congress XII is

*The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me: act justly, love goodness, and walk humbly with your God*

**Orlando, Florida, 1BJuly 9, 2017– The Twelfth National Black Catholic Congress concluded on Sunday with the Delegates’ commitment to a Preamble laying out the principles of a Pastoral Plan of Action. After a concluding Mass celebrated by Bishop Roy Campbell, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, D.C. with a homily by Bishop Fernand Cheri, Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans the 2,000 Delegates agreed to the following Pastoral Priorities in the Preamble:**

- We believe **the Holy Spirit, who is Lord and Giver of Life, is upon us.** Because of this, we recommit ourselves to live our Baptism as Catholics, be “authentically Black and truly Catholic” and seek leadership in our Church on all levels.
- We commit ourselves to promote the causes for canonization of the five holy women and men being considered for sainthood in our Church.
- We commit ourselves to **act justly** by living in proximity with those who are suffering and neglected. Specifically, we seek to promote the dignity and life of everyone person from the

unborn to natural death. We commit ourselves to dismantle racism in all forms, which is an obstacle to justice and evangelization. We also commit ourselves to address the challenges of mental illness, mass incarceration, domestic violence and others.

- We commit ourselves to **love goodness** by sharing our Faith with others using creative ways, especially social media, as we evangelize in our community. We commit ourselves to support our Catholic Schools in our community.
- We commit ourselves to **walk humbly** with our God and affirm the universal call to holiness as it is lived out in all forms of vocations in our Church – marriage, single life, consecrated women and men and clergy.
- We commit ourselves to listen and respond to the needs of the youth and young adults in our community as we pass on this legacy of our Faith.
- We commit to align these priorities with the outcomes of the Convocation of Catholic Leaders as “missionary disciples” called to spread the Joy of the Gospel.
- Finally, we commit ourselves to apply these priorities on the local diocesan, regional and national level and review them on a yearly basis.

The Delegates also received a report from the Youth Delegates to the Congress which reiterated their commitment to the central elements of the Catholic Faith, expressed pride in their identity as both Blacks and Catholics, requested the opportunity to take leadership positions in the Church and emphasized their belief in the life and dignity of every human being.

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