

**GOD**

of Mercy and Love we place our  
African American Families before You today.

May we be proud of our history and never forget those who paid a great price for our liberation. Bless us one by one and keep our hearts and minds fixed on higher ground. Help us to live for you and not for ourselves, and may we cherish and proclaim the gift of life. Bless our parents, guardians and grandparents, relatives and friends. Give us the amazing grace to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Help us, as Your children, to live in such a way that the beauty and greatness of authentic love is reflected in all that we say and do. Give a healing anointing to those less fortunate, especially the motherless, the fatherless, the broken, the sick and the lonely. Bless our departed family members and friends. May they be led into the light of Your dwelling place where we will never grow old, where we will share the fullness of redemption and shout the victory for all eternity. This we ask in the Precious Name of Jesus, our Savior and Blessed Assurance. Amen. Holy Mary, Mother of Our Families, pray for us.

Prayer composed by  
FR. JIM GOODE, OFM,

who in 1989 founded this National Day of Prayer  
for the African American and African Family.

**NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER  
FOR THE AFRICAN AMERICAN  
AND AFRICAN FAMILY**

**THANK  
GOD**

**WE ARE  
NOT  
EMPTY-  
HANDED**

**FEBRUARY 5, 2012**



## **SUPPORTERS**

BLACK AND INDIAN MISSION OFFICE

BLESSED SACRAMENT SISTERS

FRANCISCAN HANDMAIDS OF MARY

HOLY FAMILY SISTERS

KNIGHTS OF PETER CLAVER AND LADIES AUXILIARY

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## **HOW TO CELEBRATE THIS DAY**

WORSHIP together at the Eucharistic Table and pray as a family on the National Day of Prayer for the African American and African Family.

Celebrate a meal together and tell your FAMILY STORY.

Set aside some time to read the FAMILY BIBLE. Say a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, for the needs of all families throughout the world.

Make a FAMILY RESOLUTION no matter how big or small, on the National Day of Prayer for the African American and African Family. Strive to fulfill that resolution throughout the year.

Join in SOLIDARITY with our African sisters and brothers in the Motherland, as we pray for their needs and their families.

**NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER  
FOR THE AFRICAN AMERICAN  
AND AFRICAN FAMILY**





**Here's a thought...** Some of us may not have much in the bank or we feel that our 401 account seems insufficient. Many of us don't own houses on Candyland Lane or have the opportunity to follow the Yellowbrick Road.

We recognize that in this life there are many strong uninvited challenges that come to us, sweeping us into a flood of unspeakable situations. But, here's another thought...

We've got Jesus and Jesus will never forsake us or leave us empty handed. With Jesus as the center of our lives and our families we have the possibility of becoming divinely defined because Jesus stands ready to throw out the lifeline, call in the troops of angels, visit you and yours at the midnight hour and transform You and the situation at hand. Every time we pitch our tents to live with Jesus or follow our Jesus up the mountain, we have the possibility of becoming transformed like Peter, James and John became in the story of the Transfiguration. With Jesus and each other we are never empty handed. Our hands can become full.

We live in times of great consequences, therefore with Jesus we live in a time of great opportunity as well. The inner rhythm of moving closer and closer to Jesus brings about a sacred spirituality, a sacred power that no one can take. Thank God we are not empty handed, this I know for the Bible tells me so.

**Here's a story from scripture** that brings strength to the truth of God's abundance for your life and your family's life. Consider John 21:1-19 whereby Jesus appears to the disciples while they were at sea, trying to catch some fish without success.

This scripture reading says that all through the night, the disciples worked in the boat and caught nothing. All through the night, they bent their backs and caught nothing. They threw over their nets, not once, not twice but many times and through it all they were empty handed. At daybreak, they had nothing to show for their earnest work, they saw that they were empty handed. On their own without Jesus, they had nothing!

We know what it is like to work all through the night and to come to a new day wondering if our work is worth anything. We look at our world and

sometimes things can look hopeless. Sometimes a day can see too much. We look back at our lives and say, have I worked all through my youth, my middle age, my

**We don't have to be empty handed.** Jesus is right here all the time calling out to you, "Children, cast your net upon the waters, throw it in the right direction. Throw it on the star-board side. Throw it towards Jesus, the Christ"

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Star of David saying... "I look into the future and I see that a bright star will arise and guide them" (Numbers 24:17). If you want your children, your family to go in the right direction, then throw your net on the starboard side. If you want your church to grow spiritually and increase your numbers, then throw your net in the right direction. We don't have to be empty handed. If you want food to eat, throw your net on the starboard side. If you want food for the journey for yourself and your family, throw your net onto the starboard side. It is by no accident that the scriptures record that 153 large fish were caught. That means they had enough for themselves and somebody else.

Just think, at first the apostles thought they were empty handed, after all Jesus had ascended into heaven at the time of this story. They thought their power had vanished. Somebody (they thought) had unplugged the SON, but once they were able to stand up and see the Son, they could do what they had to do! We can stand up too and see Jesus... preparing for us, feeding us and our souls over and over again.

**THANK GOD THAT WE ARE NOT EMPTY HANDED** as long as we look to the Star of David for His light will shine on those who need it the most. God will come to the rescue. And because we know Jesus, the Spirit will give us what we need, energizing us with some high octane spiritual hope to overcome and restore the situation and our souls.

Thank God that we are not empty-handed. We've got the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Surely, surely, surely His goodness will follow us all the days of our lives. To God be the glory!

THERESE WILSON FAVORS

