

NEWS

Milestone in Catholic History with First African American Cardinal

BY ERIKA SOUKUP

ON OCTOBER 25, 2020, Pope Francis made a surprise announcement and named 13 new cardinals, one of which is Wilton Gregory, the first African American cardinal. Wilton's elevation to the College of Cardinals is truly a milestone in Black Catholic history in the United States.

In the book *The History of Black Catholics in the United States* written by Cyprian Davis, insight is given about the faith of African American Catholicism. Davis writes, "The story of African American Catholicism is the story of a people who obstinately clung to a faith that gave them sustenance, even when it did not always make them welcome. Like many others, blacks had to fight for their faith; but their fight was often with members of their own [Catholic] household."

Gregory has been a priest since the age of 25, and according to BBC News, in the United States, Archbishop Gregory has been a prominent voice in the effort to root out abuse within the Church. In 2001, he was elected president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops where the bishops adopted a "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," and, in 2002, he even persuaded Church leaders to have tougher penalties for abusers.

Gregory is known for speaking out and adding his voice in controversial issues. He stated about the murder of George Floyd, "Many of us remember similar incidents in our history that accompanied the Civil Rights Movement, where we repeatedly saw Black Americans viciously brutalized by police on television and in newspaper photos. The horror of George Floyd's death, like all acts of racism, hurts all of us in the Body of Christ since we are each made in the image and likeness of God, and deserve the dignity that comes with that existence." According to BBC News, after President Trump's visit in June to the shrine for St. Paul John II, Archbishop Gregory said St John Paul II "certainly would not condone the use of tear gas and other deterrents to silence, scatter or intimidate them for a photo opportunity in front of a place of worship and peace."

Not only an advocate for social issues, Gregory is also an advocate for the Catholic members to be active members of the world and not to sit on the sidelines. As he told young Catholics at a Theology on Tap gathering, "To be a member of the Church means you've got to get in and get your hands dirty in the mix of the whole arena of faith from what we believe and profess to how we live and treat one another."

This milestone in Catholic history has Gregory himself stating, "With a very grateful and humble heart, I thank Pope Francis for this appointment which will allow me to work more closely with him in caring for Christ's Church."

CSP Education Department Initiative

BY DAVINA BELLINGER

AFTER THE PANDEMIC HIT, Concordia's student teachers were sent home where they would have to try to teach online for their students. A lot of these new teachers were interrupted from their teaching and mentoring from their professors.

As a higher institution, CSP's education department created a program for these new teachers to help them receive the mentoring they need to continue the learning curve for them. The program is called "CSP Saturdays," where on one Saturday each month, new teachers can continue where they left off last April.

The program also has guest speakers come and discuss ways on how to better prepare their students, either in an online or traditional teaching style that works for both the teachers and students. CSP Saturdays also has monthly guest speakers to discuss different topics in order to help these teachers think critically on how they can become great educators for their students.

On November 14th, they had a guest speaker come in and talked about trauma informed instructions. This is a very important topic to discuss because these students have been on their computers since spring. Most students in middle and high school find their schools to be a safe place for them because of poor economic status or family issues that take a toll on them.

Leading this program are faculty members from the CSP education department Kristin Conrad, Sue Starks, and Athena Novack. These women have helped create

a safe place for these new teachers to really open up their potential as leaders in the classroom and build better relationships with their students.

Kristin Conrad has been teaching at CSP for five years and has been a teacher overall for nineteen years. One tip she always gives to her student teachers: "No learning can happen until you build relationships because it helps establish trust between the teacher and student."

Sue Starks has been teaching at CSP for thirteen years and has been a teacher overall for thirty years. Starks said, "Getting to know your students is key to building a great relationship with each student because it helps teachers have an open mind when helping their students learn in the academic world."

Athena Novack has been teaching at CSP for four years and has been a teacher for over twenty years. Novack said, "Balancing technology platforms for new teachers is important but technology should be used for assignment and meeting purposes, phone calling students helps teachers to be able to contact one on one with their students."

CSP Saturdays

We invite you, our recent graduates and friends*, to join us at CSP to:

- Connect with others,
- Share your stories, and
- join in on Purposeful conversations with guest speakers about
 - building relationships,
 - classroom management,
 - Parent-Teacher conferences,
 - trauma informed teaching,
 - distance learning successes,
 - etc.

*Working with other new teachers? Bring a colleague! You do not have to be a CSP grad to attend.

Join us via zoom on select Saturdays from 10:00-noon

RSVP each month and come ready to share and ask questions

CSP Saturdays is a safe space to mentor and collaborate with your peers, ask questions, and get support as you navigate your initial years in the field. We will talk about what works and what does not work and you will have the chance to give back to the profession. Additionally, this collaboration will look good to your supervisor for your performance review and shows you are a reflective practitioner!

Photo Credit: Athena Novack