



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, February 16, 2025

Black History is American History Every Single Day

A little history: “The month-long celebration recognizing the contributions of Black people to the United States evolved from *Negro History Week*, which was started in 1926 by historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASALH). The week in February was chosen because it includes the birthdays of famed abolitionist, author, and orator Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln, who issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

The week-long event became Black History Month in 1976 when Gerald Ford extended recognition for the often-overlooked accomplishments of Black people throughout the nation. Black History Month has been celebrated annually in February in the United States since then.” (Melissa Noel, *Essence*, 2/1/25)

“Black History Month.... **honors all Black people from all periods of U.S. history**, from the enslaved people first brought over from Africa in the early 17th century to African Americans living in the United States today. Among the notable figures often spotlighted during Black History Month are **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**, who fought for equal rights for Blacks during the 1950s and '60s; **Thurgood Marshall**, the first African-American justice appointed to the United States Supreme Court in 1967; **Mae Jemison**, who became the first female African-American astronaut to travel to space in 1992; **Barack Obama**, who was elected the first-ever African-American president of the United States in 2008, and **John Lewis**, who as a Congressman from 1987-2020 continued his work for civil rights and encouraged young people to do the hard work necessary to change the country by getting into *good trouble*].”

Since 1926, other countries have joined the United States in celebrating Black people and their contributions to history and culture, including Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Today Black History Month continues the discussion of Black people and their contributions through activities such as museum exhibits and film screenings, and by **encouraging the study of achievements by African Americans year-round.**” (Kay Boatner, *National Geographic*, 2/9/25)



A Prayer for Black History Month

God of justice, this Black History Month we honor the voices, wisdom, and resilience of Black leaders who have fought for justice – both social and environmental. Strengthen our commitment to stand against the environmental injustices that disproportionately harm Black communities. May we follow in the footsteps of those who have worked tirelessly for clean air, safe water, and a flourishing earth for all. Guide us to act with love, courage, and faith as we strive for a world where all of creation thrives. Amen. *Catholic Climate Covenant*

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@holycrossphl.org.
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