

St. Gregory Palamas Festival of Light Lenten Retreat March 22-24, 2019

African Americans and Orthodox Christianity

Ancestry, History & Mission

Guest Speaker: Fr. Moses Berry

Friday, March 22

6:00PM Akathistos/Salutations Service 7:30PM Lenten Meal

8:00PM **My Ancestry, Life Journey & Orthodoxy**

Fr. Moses, a third-generation African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) pastor's son, shares the fascinating stories of his ancestors, his own life journey and how he became an Orthodox Christian and eventually a priest in the Orthodox Church of America. As with every conversion story, his can be helpful when we seek a different, perhaps broader understanding of our faith, and how to share it with our neighbors.

Saturday, March 23

10:00AM Coffee and Fellowship

10:30AM **History of Orthodox Christianity in Africa**

Fr. Moses speaks about the rich history of the Eastern church in Africa. While Christianity has been characterized by some as "White man's religion," the truth of the Faith as it has developed over the millennia challenges that harmful description at every turn. Fr. Moses speaks to his experience of the saints, particularly those desert Fathers who have been so influential to him and other people of color.

12:00PM Lenten Potluck Luncheon

1:00PM **African American Experience & Orthodoxy**

Until recently, African Americans have had little exposure to the Orthodox Church, and the Church as a whole has done little to change this. However, the Christianity adopted by slaves has been called this country's only "suffering church." Fr. Moses describes how strongly the traditional Black church connects with Orthodox spirituality and how we Orthodox can approach our country's racial history to move towards healing and reconciliation.

3:00PM Great Vespers Service

Sunday, March 24

8:15AM Orthros Service 9:30AM Divine Liturgy

4:00PM Pan Orthodox Lenten Vespers

Fr. Moses Berry is an archpriest in the Orthodox Church in America Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest, serving Theotokos "Unexpected Joy" Eastern Orthodox Church in Ash Grove, Missouri that includes a consecrated cemetery. He is also curator of The Ozarks Afro-American Heritage Museum. Fr. Moses is in demand as a speaker on African American Christianity and Orthodox mission. He is co-founder and current president of the Brotherhood of St. Moses the Black. Fr. Moses is a contributor to "An Unbroken Circle: Linking Ancient African Christianity to the African-American Experience." He has appeared on "Good Morning America" and on the National Geographic channel. In 2017 he was awarded a Louisville Institute Pastoral Study Grant, "Bringing African Americans to Orthodoxy" and is a recipient of the St. Irenaeus Institute award.



St. Gregory Palamas, an articulate defender of Orthodoxy and true prayer in the 14th century, is commemorated the second Sunday of Great Lent each year. He is the inspiration for this weekend festival featuring lectures, worship and fellowship.

For directions to Saint George Greek Orthodox Church visit our website at stgeorgegoc.org or call 651-222-6220 111 Summit Ave. St Paul, MN 55105





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BIOGRAPHY Fr. Moses Berry



Background

Fr. Moses Berry is an archpriest in the Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest, Orthodox Church in America. He was ordained by Bishop Job of blessed memory, in 2000.

He serves at Theotokos “Unexpected Joy” Eastern Orthodox Church in Ash Grove, a parish he started in 1998 after he and his wife, Magdalena, with their two children, moved to Ash Grove from St. Louis, Missouri to maintain the cemetery that rests on property that had been purchased by Fr. Moses great-grandfather acquired in 1872.

In 1875, the family designated an acre for the burial of “Slaves, Paupers and Indians,” which has since been consecrated as an Orthodox cemetery, named Holy Resurrection. It is on the National Registry of Historic Places. Continually owned by his family since then, the “Berry place” is a Missouri Century Farm, one of the few held by African Americans.

The church stands close to an enormous sycamore tree--the same tree that his ancestors used as a shelter for church picnics and other celebrations for over a century.

Fr. Moses is also curator of the Ozarks Afro-American Heritage Museum. After 10 years in a small storefront, the museum collection is now available on line at <http://oaahm.omeka.net>. It has an extensive collection of photographs and artifacts of rural Afro-American life in the surrounding areas, preserved by the Berrys and other families over many years.

Fr. Moses, who was a non-denomination pastor for eleven years, is in demand as a speaker on African American Christianity and Orthodox mission. He co-presented with Fr. John Behr at the 2012 Eagle River Institute in Anchorage, Alaska, and has spoken at events at St. Tikhon's and St. Vladimir's seminaries.

He is co-founder and current president of the Brotherhood of St. Moses the Black, which sponsors the annual Ancient Christianity Conference. The Brotherhood, whose membership is pan-jurisdictional and multi-ethnic, seeks to edify and evangelize people of color, both Orthodox and seekers.

Fr. Moses is a contributor to “*An Unbroken Circle: Linking Ancient African Christianity to the African-American Experience*.” He has appeared on “Good Morning America” and on the National Geographic channel.

In 2017 he was awarded a Louisville Institute Pastoral Study Grant, “Bringing African Americans to Orthodoxy” and is a recipient of the St. Irenaeus Institute award. The Institute is sponsored by St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, St. Louis.

More About Fr. Moses Berry:

<https://frmosesberry.com/about/>

Theotokos Unexpected Joy Orthodox Church (OCA)

<https://unexpectedjoychurch.org/administration.html>

<https://oca.org/parishes/oca-mw-asgtuj>

Ozarks Afro-American Heritage Museum Online

<https://oaahm.omeka.net>

Fr. Moses Berry: From Hippie Bad-boy to Cool-cat to Humble...

<http://orthochristian.com/111710.html>

Black Priest Shares Past, Enlightening White Town

<https://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/30/us/30religion.html>

The Brotherhood of Moses the Black

<https://journeytoorthodoxy.com/2017/05/brotherhood-moses-the-black/>

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