

Black Catholic Initiative

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 6, 2017

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Black Catholic Initiative hosts 2nd annual Commemoration of the Civil Rights Movement

Celebration honoring Dr. Lena McLin, also featured keynote by Jacky Grimshaw

(CHICAGO) – The Black Catholic Initiative (BCI) hosted its second annual Commemoration of the Civil rights Movement on January 13th at the Archbishop Quigley Pastoral Center at St. James Chapel, 835 N. Rush St. The commemoration was headlined by **Jacquelyn (Jacky) D. Grimshaw**, vice president for policy at the **Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT)**. For the first time the Commemoration included the recognition of a local civil rights pioneer. **Dr. Lena McLin** received the “**Unbroken Circle**” Award for her achievements as a long-time music educator, composer, author and pastor. The evening included performances by McLin’s choral group, an interpretative reading of the works of Dr. King by **Brandon Sapp** and the keynote from Grimshaw.

The BCI created the Civil Rights Commemoration in homage to the movement and the influence it has had on the history of the country. **Father David Jones** of the BCI noted that the movement is not one person, but rather an amalgam of the contributions of many individuals. “This year’s honoree, Dr. Lena McLin, is one of those incredible people who have dedicated themselves to improving the lives of others through her craft, and we are excited to recognize her during this special program.”

Serving as musical director for the event will be **Arthur D. Griffin, Jr.** another long-time CPS educator in math and science. Additionally, Griffin, who comes from a long line of music educators, is a nationally recognized, award winning organist and lifelong resident of Chicago’s west side.

Dr. McLin was. Trained at the American Conservatory of Music, the Spelman College graduate is the niece of Tommy Dorsey, who is credited with creating gospel music. She founded the McLin Ensemble in the 1950s, and they made their operatic debut in November 1960 at the Abraham Lincoln Center in Chicago, with a performance of *The Cloak*. McLin also founded the McLin Opera Company in the mid-1950s with her husband Nathanael. In 1982, Dr. McLin was officially ordained as a minister at Holy Vessel Baptist Church where she serves as both pastor and the Minister of Music. Dr. McLin will receive the specially designed

During her 24 years at CNT, Grimshaw has created many initiatives in the areas of public participation in transportation planning, environmental justice and water quality. She has testified before state and national bodies on transportation reform and funding issues. Prior to joining CNT, Grimshaw was the deputy director of the Chicago Mayor’s Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and deputy treasurer of the City of Chicago. She has been a regular on commercial radio, having hosted her own public radio program, and she was a columnist for Crain’s Chicago Business.

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The Commemoration comes as a precursor to the birthday celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and to Black History Month in February. The evening's program will also include

The event is open to the public and reservations can be confirmed by visiting <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/civil-rights-tickets-28945704381>. You may also follow the Black Catholic Initiative on [Facebook](#).

HistoryMakers Profile of Dr. Lena McLin - <http://www.thehistorymakers.com/biography/reverend-dr-lena-mclin>

About the Black Catholic Initiative (BCI)

The Black Catholic Initiative (BCI) has as its focus the 66K African American Catholics served by 351 parishes, 38 of which are predominately African American. The BCI was created to prepare the church for the next generation of African American Catholics, charging them to be fully present and accountable. The goal of the BCI is to come together, and work together to give and serve the Church. The BCI is an ethnic ministry that actively participates and offers its work as a gift to the local church of Chicago. Those involved in the BCI will practice Umoja, Kujichagulia and Ujima, (unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility) to first give honor to God, and to offer Catholicity with the whole church. The BCI will be one church, not many parishes. In this tried and true tradition, the BCI will plainly and clearly be Catholic.

About the Archdiocese of Chicago

The Archdiocese of Chicago, the third largest in the United States, serves more than 2.2 million Catholics in 351 parishes in Cook and Lake Counties, a geographic area of 1,411 square miles. The Archdiocese, pastored by Archbishop Blase J. Cupich, has more than 15,000 employees in its systems and ministries, including Catholic Charities, the region's largest nonprofit social service agency. The Archdiocese also has one of the country's largest seminaries. The Archdiocese's 217 elementary and secondary schools comprise the largest U.S. private school system and have garnered more U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Awards than any system of any type.