

DOWN DEEP IN MY SOUL

An African American Catholic Theology
of Preaching

Maurice J. Nutt, CSsR

ORBIS  BOOKS
Maryknoll, New York 10545

ORBIS  BOOKS
Maryknoll, New York 10545

 Fathers and Brothers
MARYKNOLL™

Founded in 1970, Orbis Books endeavors to publish works that enlighten the mind, nourish the spirit, and challenge the conscience. The publishing arm of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Orbis seeks to explore the global dimensions of the Christian faith and mission, to invite dialogue with diverse cultures and religious traditions, and to serve the cause of reconciliation and peace. The books published reflect the views of their authors and do not represent the official position of the Maryknoll Society. To learn more about Maryknoll and Orbis Books, please visit our website at www.orbisbooks.com

Copyright © 2022 by Maurice J. Nutt, C.Ss.R.

Published by Orbis Books, Box 302, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Queries regarding rights and permissions should be addressed to: Orbis Books, P.O. Box 302, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302.

Manufactured in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Nutt, Maurice J., author.

Title: Down deep in my soul : an African American Catholic theology of preaching / Maurice J. Nutt.

Description: Maryknoll, NY : Orbis Books, [2022] | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "A comprehensive treatment of preaching in the Black Catholic tradition"—Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022015606 (print) | LCCN 2022015607 (ebook) | ISBN 9781626984943 (trade paperback) | ISBN 9781608339563 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Catholic preaching. | African American preaching.

Classification: LCC BX1795.P72 N88 2022 (print) | LCC BX1795.P72 (ebook) | DDC 251.0089/96073—dc23/eng/20220506

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022015606>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022015607>

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Foreword</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Diana L. Hayes, JD, PhD, STD</i>	
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>xix</i>
Preaching and Evangelism	xxi
Challenges	xxiii
Outline of <i>Down Deep in My Soul</i>	xxvi
1. The Uniqueness of African American Culture, Spirituality, and Religious Experience	1
<i>Part I: From African Traditional Religion to Black Christianity</i>	1
Traditional African Religion	2
The Loss of Social Cohesion	5
Christian Religion as a New Basis of Social Cohesion	7
Slave Religion	9
<i>Part II: Characteristics of Black Spirituality</i>	13
Black Spirituality Is Contemplative	14
Black Spirituality Is Holistic	16
Black Spirituality Is Biblical	18
Black Spirituality Is Joyful	20
Black Spirituality Is Communal	22
2. The Black Preaching Style: Its Origins, Language, Method, and Techniques	24
<i>Part I: The Origins and Language of the Black Preaching Style</i>	24

The African Oral Tradition and Effects of Slavery
on Modes of Communication 25

Licensed by the Spirit: Slave Preaching 28

The Style and Content of Early Black Preaching 29

The Uniqueness of Black Preaching 32

The Uniqueness of the Black Preacher 32

What Is Black Preaching? 33

The Evolution of Black Preaching 34

 Kenyatta R. Gilbert's Trivocal Preaching 34

 Prophetic Black Preaching 36

 Priestly Black Preaching 37

 Sagely Black Preaching 38

Non-African Americans' Commitment to Preach
to the African American Community 40

*Part II: The Method and Techniques
of the Black Preaching Style 42*

Black Preaching and Cultural Adaptation
in Roman Catholic Worship 43

Black Preaching and the African American Catholic
Congregation 45

The Black Preaching Style and Method 48

 Call and Response 48

 Storytelling 51

 Intonation 51

 Repetition 52

 Rhythm and Rhyme 53

 Song (Musicality) 54

**3. Will It Preach? Homily Preparation, Development,
and Delivery 56**

The Purpose of the Homily 57

 Four Functions of the Homily in an African American
 Catholic Liturgical Context: Information,
 Inspiration, Motivation, and Celebration 58

Appreciating the Lectionary 62

Creating a Preaching Notebook 64

Homily Preparation within a Week (Six Stages) 64

Structuring the Homily 68

 Narrative Preaching in the African American
 Tradition 68

Appreciating African American Literature as a Resource for Preaching	72	
Homily Introduction: Capturing and Keeping Their Attention	72	
The Heart of the Homily: Carrying Them on a Journey	74	
Homily Conclusion: Inviting Them to Celebrate	74	
Delivering the Homily	77	
Finding and Owning Your Voice	78	
Claiming Your Preaching Presence	78	
4. The Black Preaching Style as an Effective Means of Inculturated Evangelization		80
What Is Evangelization?	81	
A Catholic Approach to Evangelization	83	
Pope Francis on Preaching and Evangelization	85	
A Preaching Pope	85	
To Those on the Peripheries: A Pastoral Preaching Pope	87	
The Joy of the Gospel <i>Evangelii Gaudium</i>	91	
Sunday of the Word of God	94	
What Is Inculturation?	97	
Inculturation and Evangelization	99	
From Parish-Centered to Metro-Centered Evangelization	100	
Black Preaching and Inculturated Evangelization	104	
Mission, Ministry, and Identity of the Preacher	106	
The Catholic Church: Acknowledging a Racist Past and Forging a Hopeful Future	109	
5. Whom Shall I Send?		115
Who <i>Can</i> and Who <i>Should</i> Preach? Seeking a Way Forward	115	
A Canonical Rationale for Lay Preaching	117	
Lay Preaching within the African American Catholic Community	121	
Is there a Word from the Lord? Opportunities for African American Catholic Lay Preaching	123	
Preaching without Words: African American Catholic Witness of Holiness	125	
Let the Church Roll On: The Enduring Faith of Catholic Hill	127	

Black Catholic Women Preach: Valuable Contributions to Catholic Preaching	129
6. Rhetorical Agency and the Black Prophetic Tradition	137
Radical Rhetoric	137
Prophetic Imagination	139
The Prophetic Rhetorical Agency of Baldwin, King, Bowman, and Massingale	140
James Baldwin	141
Martin Luther King Jr.	143
Thea Bowman, FSPA	145
Bryan N. Massingale	148
7. Toward an African American Catholic Theology of Preaching	152
The Holy Spirit and Preaching	153
Preaching and Ecumenism (Pastoral Considerations)	155
Preaching as Celebration	159
Preaching for Liberation	161
Preaching on Social Issues	162
Practice What You Preach: Preaching and Living	
Racial Justice in the Catholic Church	165
<i>Conclusion: Go Forth and Announce the Good News</i>	181
<i>Bibliography</i>	187
<i>Selected Bibliography of African American Preaching</i>	197
<i>Index</i>	203