

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2026 AT TRINITY

FOCUS ON BLACK THEOLOGIANS

Sunday, February 15 - Dr. Diana Lynn Hayes (born 1947)

Dr. Diana Lynn Hayes is Emeritus Professor of Systematic Theology in the Department of Theology at Georgetown. She is the first African American woman to receive the Pontifical Doctor of Sacred Theology degree (S.T.D.) from the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium) and has also received three honorary doctorates. Author of 9 books and over 75 articles, in retirement Dr. Hayes continues to teach as an Adjunct at the Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership at the Oblate School of Theology and during summers at the Institute of Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University of New Orleans. A self-described former attorney who was called into the Roman Catholic Church at the age of 33 after being a lapsed member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (which she left at age 16), Hayes attributes her calling to become a theologian to the exposure she received to Liberation Theologies while in school and specifically to James Cone, the founder of Black Liberation Theology. As quoted in the *Misogynoir to Mishpat Research Network*, "In May of 1985, I was given Alice Walker's book, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* as a birthday gift. I immediately recognized myself and the issues I was having with Black Liberation Theology and Catholic Theology. From then on, I named myself a Womanist (never a feminist)...Womanist Theology is a theology of, by, and for women of African descent throughout the Diaspora that brings to the attention of theology and other academic disciplines, the needs, and concerns of Black women. Dr. Hayes' unique and timely voice addresses two questions she has not been able to escape on her journey to becoming a black Catholic Womanist theologian: "Where are the voices of Black men and women? Why are their contributions missing?"



Publications include:

- *Trouble Don't Last Always: Soul Prayers* (Liturgical Press, 1995)
- *Hagar's Daughters: Womanist Ways of Being in the World* (Paulist Press, 1995)
- *Were You There?: Stations of the Cross* (Orbis Books, 1999)
- *Standing in the Shoes My Mother Made: A Womanist Theology* (Fortress Press, 2011)
- *Forged in the Fiery Furnace: African American Spirituality* (Orbis Books, 2012)
- *No Crystal Stair: Womanist Spirituality* (Orbis Books, 2016)

NEXT WEEK - FEBRUARY 22: DR. DELORES SENEVA WILLIAMS (1934-2022)