



# BECAUSE *we are* CATHOLIC

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MARYLAND SERVES AND ADVOCATES FOR THE POOR, VULNERABLE AND THOSE IN NEED NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE CATHOLIC, BUT BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC.

## **A Message from the Maryland Catholic Conference February 21, 2013**

St. Frances Academy is the oldest Catholic educational institution with African-American roots. Established in 1828, it is an independent Catholic high school serving as an agent of positive change within its Baltimore inner-city neighborhood (located at 501 East Chase Street).

With three of every four students living in a single-parent household and 35% living in a household with an income below the poverty line, students overcome these adversities and 95% of them enroll in college.

St. Frances Academy's founding mission was to teach "children of color to read the Bible" - an illegal act during an era of American slavery. One of its founders was Mother Mary Lange, a candidate for sainthood within the Catholic Church.

In Mother Lange's day, overcoming racism was the task at hand. Today, children must overcome the devastating impact of drugs, violence and poverty. In the midst of such devastation, the achievements of SFA students are inspirational.

*In recognition of Black History Month, we are pleased to share with you a copy of "Blacks in Catholic History Month Moments," a publication of the Archdiocese of Washington Office of Black Catholics.*