

# Journal of the Black Catholic Theological Symposium

---

Volume 13

Article 2

---

12-1-2021

## Letter from the Editor: Hope

Kimberly Flint-Hamilton  
*St. Lawrence University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ecommons.udayton.edu/jbcts>



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Flint-Hamilton, Kimberly (2021) "Letter from the Editor: Hope," *Journal of the Black Catholic Theological Symposium*: Vol. 13, Article 2.

Available at: <https://ecommons.udayton.edu/jbcts/vol13/iss1/2>

This Editorial is brought to you for free and open access by eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Journal of the Black Catholic Theological Symposium* by an authorized editor of eCommons. For more information, please contact [mschlangen1@udayton.edu](mailto:mschlangen1@udayton.edu), [ecommons@udayton.edu](mailto:ecommons@udayton.edu).

## Hope

Kimberly Flint-Hamilton, Ph.D.  
St. Lawrence University

*Job 14:7*

*For there is hope for a tree,  
When it is cut down, that it will sprout again,  
And its shoots will not fail.*

*Jeremiah 29:11*

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord,  
"plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give  
you hope and a future."*

It's been two years since our last volume. Two years of global illness and affliction. Two years of loss and fear as COVID, so far, has claimed the lives of more than 800,000 in the United States alone, and more than 5 million worldwide. And two years of harsh reminders that racism, both overt and implicit, is alive and well, and raging through our communities and culture.

Most of us have experienced loss in a deeply personal way. We've lost loved ones - dear friends and family members. Many lost jobs, income, and housing. Our students lost opportunities to learn in an engaging environment, and we lost the chance to connect with them. Moreover, the move to a virtual learning environment caused low-income students to lose even more, as many lacked permanent housing or adequate space and resources to learn and support structures to help them cope with these difficulties.

The murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Daunte Wright, and so many other young Black men and women over the years by law enforcement and vigilantes reminded us again of the harsh and unforgiving realities of racism. Attacks on Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders reminded us that racial hatred isn't confined to Blacks alone. Protests all over the world - by people of every race and color - brought details of these encounters to our attention through social media, and we grew more aware of the disparate racialized impact of COVID on communities of color.

Then in 2021, the insurrection of January 6<sup>th</sup> shocked us as supporters of the then-outgoing president stormed the capital in an effort to overturn the election results. Moreover, the ongoing attacks on voting rights threaten our very democracy.

And even as colleges and universities returned to the more traditional, in-person mode of teaching and learning as COVID vaccines became available, variants of the original virus continued to evolve and disrupt our communities. As I write today, the more highly transmissible *omicron* variant has been reported in every US state, just one month after first being reported in this country.

These are just a few of the many challenges we faced as our world transformed around us. And the transformation is not yet done. So many changes have taken place, so many sources of pain and anxiety for us all. What will the “new normal” look like when we finally emerge from this?

The one thing that we can cling to, the one thing that keeps us moving forward through this heavy time, is hope. Hope allows us to imagine a better world even as the image of that world eludes us. Hope reminds us that we each have a role to play and a responsibility to make that better world manifest. Hope shows us that the arc of the moral universe may be long, but it bends toward justice, as Martin Luther King Jr. reminded us more than half a century ago. Hope helps us discern our compassion for one another and our faith in the power of good.

Hope opens the door to empathy, even for those who are struggling against us. All human beings share a fundamental humanity, and no matter how different we appear, we have far more in common than what separates us. Hope gives us the strength to move on and the courage to stand firm in our convictions.

The work of our scholars as they toiled through the morass of these past two years has helped us keep hope alive, and the 2021 Journal bolsters our hope in the future. In this year’s volume, SimonMary Aihokhai calls for more intentional intellectual and social discourse as our institutions and curricula become more diverse in his article, *The Demands of Encounter in a Globalized Community of Scholars: Shedding Light on the Place of Trust in the Ritual of Knowledge Creation*. Katrina Sanders shares the history of a lesser-known Catholic college dedicated to the education of African Americans in her article, *The Almost Forgotten History of Claver College*. And, Cecilia Moore, Steven Hamilton, and I offer a glimpse into the life and legacy of charter BCTS member Sr. Dr. Jamie Phelps in our oral history essay, *Responding to the Call: A Conversation with Sr. Jamie Phelps, O.P., Ph.D.*

Members also offer reviews of six books:

Teresia Mbari Hinga's book, *African, Christian, Feminist: The Enduring Search for What Matters*, by SimonMary Ahiokhai; Vincent Lloyd's book, *Black Natural Law*, by Cary Dabney; SimonMary Ahiokhai's book, *Fostering Interreligious Encounters in Pluralist Societies: Hospitality and Friendship*, by Anna Perkins; Nyasha Junior's book, *Reimagining Hagar: Blackness and Bible*, by Kim Harris; David Gowler's and Kipton Jensen's book, *Howard Thurman: Sermons on the Parables*, by C. Vanessa White; and finally, Vincent Lloyd's book, *Religion of the Field Negro: On Black Secularism and Black Theology*, by Paul Green.

May we commit to moving forward in hope.

