



Cynthia Copeland

Cynthia Copeland was formed in her Christian life by the sacraments and teachings of the Episcopal Church of her youth. Now, a long-time member of Saint Mark's Church in-the-Bowery, she has served as a vestry person and warden and chorister, and as a leader of the parish's annual Good Friday Blues. She is also a co-chair of this diocese's Reparations Commission.

In that reparations work she led a profound inquiry into the history and legacy of slavery across our two hundred churches, particularly bearing fruit in the three-year venture of Lamentation, Apology and Reparation which has been transformative for our commitment to making Beloved Community together. But this kind of inquiry and deep historical work was not new for Cynthia.

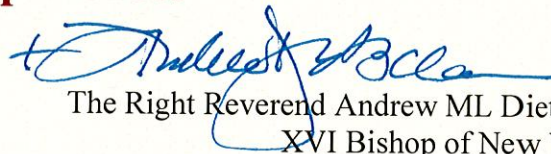
At a young age her eyes were opened to injustices across history, and dedicated herself to righting those wrongs, in the world and within her beloved Episcopal Church, convicted that it is in acknowledging wrong and making amends that all God's children are redeemed. As the President of the Institute for the Study of the Exploration of Seneca Village, and excavating that site, to study the lives of African Americans displaced in order to build Central Park, she came to see and understand the redemptive possibility of historical study. She has said,

"I think we as living human beings are responsible for trying to always get to the truth, to speak for people who didn't have a voice or who don't have a voice in present-day society, and try to help those who don't have a voice ... to give it to them and let them know that they have strength and they should be empowered to be able to do that. ... So my hope is that through the work that I do, particularly with Seneca Village and other related communities that it's like bringing people to the table and giving everybody an equal spot. That's my way of being and thinking and it's Pollyannaish, I know, but I just have this desire and I strive and I aspire for parity. I can envision a different world where we can all sit at the table and have an equal ... place at the table and that makes us rich, that makes us who we are, that helps us to understand each other so much better."

The excavation of Seneca Village has enriched the life and history of this our city, and helped to amend an old story of injustice. In the same way, the deep reparation work she is leading in our diocese is enriching our life and history and opening new possibilities for amending our history and building strength and glory for our diocesan community.

Therefore, in recognition and gratitude for her commitment to the redemption of unjust history, offered to the glory of God, we, on this 12th day of November 2022, in the eleventh year of our consecration, do award her

The Bishop's Cross



The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
XVI Bishop of New York