

Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years

Fact Sheet

Kraft Premier Movie on CBS

HAVING OUR SAY, The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years was a Kraft Premier movie, broadcast on Sunday, April 18, 1999 on the CBS Television Network. Written by Sarah and A. Elizabeth Delany with Amy Hill Hearth, when the sisters were 101 and 103 years old, the best-selling book became the basis for a Broadway success. The made for television movie was written by Emily Mann and directed by Lynne Littman. Executive Producers were Camille O. Cosby and Judith Rutherford James. The film starred Diahann Carroll, Ruby Dee, and Amy Madigan. As a rich and poignant chronicle of the life journey of the remarkable Delany sisters, their incredible story is one of joys, sorrows, challenges, and opportunities. At the same time, it was the story of a nation, an era, a people, and a family whose faith in God served to undergird their ability not only to survive, but to achieve.



Congregational Outreach Initiative

Managed by Outreach Extensions in collaboration with the Interdenominational Theological Center, Camille Cosby, and Judith Rutherford James, the outreach campaign centered upon the development and distribution of a two-color, 24-page (8.5" x 3.5") Viewer's Guide. The centerfold was a tune-in flyer that recipients could post to promote viewership; a timeline, from 1889 to 1999, provided highlights of the sisters' lives within the context of America's broader history.

Addressed "Dear Pastor," The Viewer's Guide offered strategies, sermons, and scriptures related to the Delany sisters' life journey as dramatized in the movie. Its purpose was to assist pastors and their congregations in unveiling the underlying tenets of this inspiring film and in developing faith-based strategies to address the social challenges of a new millennium – and to bring people together to discuss the value of celebrating America's diversity.

Six topical areas were highlighted: history and heritage, character and service, education and achievement, pride and prejudice, youth and aging, and faith and values. Quotations by the two sisters, Sadie and Bessie, introduced each topic. "The Challenge" outlined crucial issues, events, and stories from their lives and from America's history – two challenges for each topic. "Faith-Based Strategies" for each challenge provided solution-based actions congregations could take. A scriptural lesson, "The Scripture," was provided along with titles of "Suggested Sermons." For history and heritage, for example, suggested sermons were "Lest We Forget" and "Precious Memories" (for one challenge) and "Healing the Broken Places" and "May the Circle Go Unbroken" (for the other challenge).

Hundreds of thousands of brochures were distributed through organizations and via purchased lists.

Funder

The Congregational Outreach Initiative was made possible by a generous grant from Daimler Chrysler.

Partners

Project partners included the Interdenominational Theological Center and DaimlerChrysler Foundation.

Distribution occurred through faith-based community service organizations including: American Association of Retired Persons, Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships, Congress of National Black Churches, International Faith Community, ITC/ Faith Factor, National Black Child Development Institute, and the National Office on Philanthropy and the Black Church. These organizations could be contacted by churches for additional information and/or technical assistance to help them develop programs for their communities.



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