



The Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Washington



MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

PRAY AND WORK TO END THE SIN OF RACISM

(CCC 1935)

The equality of men rests essentially on their dignity as persons and the rights that flow from it: Every form of social or cultural discrimination in fundamental personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language, or religion must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1935

The teachings of the Catholic Church provide a rich heritage with which to evaluate the personal, economic, social and legal structures that have perpetuated racism in our country. The catechetical resources in this document are designed bring about personal conversion, commitment to ongoing education on issues surrounding racism, and a spirit open to the work of racial justice in the Church and in the world.

This journey is non-linear and ongoing. Each individual brings a unique history and personal experience to the issue of racism. Therefore, it is important to have a variety of faith formation opportunities to meet the needs of the diverse and multi-cultural Church of Washington. The following themes provide the overarching structure for the resource packet, which includes lesson ideas and activities for adults, youth and children supported by Catholic teaching. Thus, rooted in Catholic doctrine and bound together in prayer, we can form disciples equipped to confront the sin of racism.

Dignity of the Human Person

Let the Church proclaim to all that the sin of racism defiles the image of God and degrades the sacred dignity of humankind which has been revealed by the mystery of the Incarnation. Let all know that it is a terrible sin that mocks the cross of Christ and ridicules the Incarnation. For the brother and sister of our Brother Jesus Christ are brother and sister to us.

Brothers and Sisters to Us

The Common Good

The Common Good is always oriented toward the progress of persons: The order of things must be subordinate to the order of persons, and not the other way around. This order is founded on truth, built up in justice, and animated by love.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1912

Subsidiarity

Let us keep in mind the principle of subsidiarity, which grants freedom to develop the capabilities present at every level of society, while also demanding a greater sense of responsibility for the common good from those who wield greater power.

Laudato Si, 196

Solidarity

Solidarity means much more than engaging in sporadic acts of generosity. It means thinking and acting in terms of community. It means that the lives of all are prior to the appropriation of goods by a few.

Fratelli Tutti, 116

Prayer and Lesson Resources

This packet includes a range of resources for adults, youth and children. Participants can complete these activities in group settings or independently. However, these resources do require guidance to get started.

While not all lessons/activities are required, it is helpful to incorporate the themes of: dignity of the human person, common good, subsidiarity and solidarity in using this resource. This will foster an integrated understanding of racism and the structures that continue to marginalize our brothers and sisters which allows us to move from an abstract idea of the dignity of each person, to a concrete embodiment of word and action to end the sin of racism.

- Archdiocese of Washington Prayer
 - Our Family Prayer for Justice and Human Dignity
- Life Giving Dialogue
- Glossary of Terms
- Resources for Adults
 - Examination of Conscience to Root Out Prejudice
 - Eucharistic Adoration Reflection
 - One Body in Christ – United Against Racism
 - Inspired by Grace – Promoting the Common Good
- Resources for Children and Youth
 - Growing in Love - Elementary
 - Show You Care - Elementary
 - Who is my neighbor (Dignity of Human Person) – Middle School Age
 - The Opposite Side (Common Good) – Middle School Age
 - Moved with Compassion (Solidarity) – Middle School Age
 - Take Care of Him (Subsidiarity) – Middle School Age
- Family Resources
 - Chains of Love
 - Family Care Poster



*We pray for a new Pentecost:
a renewal of love, justice and truth in our hearts. We are called to do justice and love
goodness in order to walk humbly with God.*

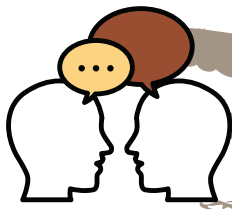
Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory

Our Family Prayer for Justice and Human Dignity

Loving and faithful God,
we come to you, Father,
to ask that through your Son, Jesus
and in communion with the Holy Spirit,
you help us in the battle against America's "original sin" of racism
that divides us from being the Body of Christ
that we are called to be as your children.
We implore you to give us your wisdom,
so that we may build a community founded on the Gospel message of
the life and dignity of all people from the womb to the tomb,
and to live in communion like the divine communion of the Holy Trinity.
Bless parents that they may form their children in faith,
to love one another regardless of skin color,
ethnicity and national origin, just as Jesus loves us.
Bless and protect all of us as we live out our faith
in being "instruments of your peace" as St. Francis said.
Fill us with a thirst for justice and righteousness.
Hear our prayer and give us the courage, compassion, and perseverance
to root out any form of injustice within our communities
and to bring the healing love of Christ to all in need.
Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Church,
hasten to help us and intercede on our behalf,
so that our Archdiocese can continue to witness to the Gospel message
of life and dignity of all people.
Amen.



The Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Washington



Life Giving Dialogue

Approaching, speaking, listening, looking at, coming to know and understand one another, and to find common ground; all these are summed up in one word "dialogue."

If we want to encounter and help one another,
we have to dialogue.

Fratelli Tutti, 198

Listening to learn allows us to discern together the paths that should be taken, act in synergy with everyone's gifts; and protect against the isolation of opposing sides or of individuals. (Adapted from the *Directory for Catechesis*, 289).

Active and fruitful dialogue are necessary for fostering conversion of heart and mind that will lead to respect for the dignity of every human person. Whether you will be engaging in these reflections and resources contained in this packet individually or in group settings, strong listening and dialogue skills are essential.

Best practices for dialogue that leads to conversion and action:

- If possible, find an undisturbed space. If this not possible, set aside distractions
- Offer a prayer to the Holy Spirit to give light and truth to the dialogue
- Look the person in the eye
- Listen to understand what the other person is saying - try to suspend pre-conceived notions
- Communicate empathetic responses non-verbally
- Be aware of words that trigger your emotions and do not let them distract you from the point being made. Common trigger words are: racism, prejudice, privilege
- Listen especially carefully when the other person is saying something that triggers your emotions or something with which you don't agree - listen to understand not to respond
- Be patient. Story telling (history telling) takes different forms in every culture. It may take some people longer than others to share their story and/or experience
- Don't interrupt - but if you are not sure you understood correctly, wait for a pause to ask clarifying questions
- Echo back what you understood the other person say
- Only after attentive listening, engage in the reciprocal dynamic of responding
- End the dialogue with a moment of gratitude - thanking the other person for sharing their story and/or experience
- Following the conversation, take to prayer the words or images that stood out for you - as you pray the Archdiocese of Washington Our Family Prayer for Justice and Human Dignity

Key Terms

— “ —

How beautiful it is when people select their words and actions with care, in the effort to avoid misunderstandings, to heal wounded memories and to build peace and harmony. Words can build bridges between individuals and within families, social groups and peoples...The words of Christians ought to be a constant encouragement to communion and, even in those cases where they must firmly condemn evil, they should never try to rupture relationships and communication.

Pope Francis, Message for World Day of Social Communications, Jan. 22, 2016

— ” —

Social media, news outlets, culture and personal experiences can imbue the same word with different meanings. Therefore, it is important to establish faith-based definitions for terms surrounding racism.

Equipped with a common framework of words and ideas related to this topic, we can move forward in conversation without allowing semantics to derail conversion and change. The glossary terms below are not intended to be all encompassing, but rather serve as a framework to begin to dialogue.

Common Good - The responsibility of everyone as it stems from our common origin, dignity, unity and equality in God to insist upon the "sum total of societal conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1924).

Dignity of the Human Person - The sacred dignity of every person is the foundation of the Catholic moral vision for society and "is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God; it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude. It is essential to a human being freely to direct himself to this fulfillment" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1700).

Micro-aggression - Discriminatory words or actions, done consciously or unconsciously, that convey negative racial slights and insults toward people because of the color of their skin, ethnicity or place of origin. Example: setting a lower expectation of a student based on their race.

Prejudice - A preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

Racism - The belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, so as to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another. Racism is a sin against God and neighbor as it denies each person's inherent dignity as created in the image and likeness of God.

Solidarity - The principle of communion among members of society to stand for truth and justice, and to pursue it for themselves and for others, in light of the Gospel mandate to love your neighbor.

Subsidiarity - A principle which protects people from abuses by higher-level social authority and calls for these same authorities to help individuals and intermediate groups to fulfil their duties - it is imperative because every person and group of people has something unique to add to the community.

I Confess...

The Catholic faith has a rich tradition in the examination of conscience as a practice to uproot sinful behaviors that harm a person's relationship with God and others. This practice is so important to the community of believers that we pause at the beginning of the Eucharistic liturgy to pray the Confiteor as we reflect on the overt and subtle ways we have failed to live as disciples of Christ.



the Confiteor

I confess to almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I ask Blessed Mary—ever virgin—all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The following reflection invites us to examine our consciences for racial biases. United in the fundamental truth that we are all created in God's image, we can work together to end the sin of racism in our hearts, our Church and our world.

In what I have done and in what I have failed to do...

Conversion is a work of grace that gives us the strength to examine our consciences to see the acts of racism we may have participated in. Only in allowing these to rise to the surface can we eliminate them from our hearts as we ask God to help us ask for forgiveness and forgive others.

EVERY...

- Racist act
- Disparaging or xenophobic comment
- Marginalizing joke - whether spoken or listened to
- Disparaging look as a reaction to color of skin, ethnicity, place of origin or economic status
- Discriminatory practice in hiring, housing or education
- Vilifying of a person based on color of skin or place of origin
- Failure to work against the unequal access to health care, education and housing
- Systematic denial of access to wealth-building opportunities
- Thought that endorses or promotes racial profiling
- Instance of setting a low expectation of another because of the color of their skin or the race and/or culture they are from
- Failure to take the time to learn to pronounce someone's name correctly
- Every time I remain silent in the face of a racist act

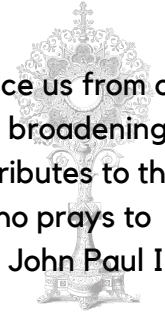
**Is a sin against charity
and denies the God-given dignity of every person**

and you my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God...

Let us pray for grace, wisdom and hearts ever open to conversion. Let us work toward honest dialogue - that heals our families, country, and world - by listening for new ways that affirm the love of God in our neighbor. Give us Lord, courage and conviction to work together to bring about the Kingdom of Heaven on earth by creating just policies that honor the dignity of every human person.

Racism must be confronted by prayer and working for change. Use the following texts as a springboard for prayer and reflection in response to the sin of racism.

Closeness to the Eucharistic Christ in silence and contemplation does not distance us from our contemporaries but, on the contrary, makes us open to human joy and distress, broadening our hearts on a global scale. Through adoration the Christian mysteriously contributes to the radical transformation of the world and to the sowing of the gospel. Anyone who prays to the Eucharistic Savior draws the whole world with him and raises it to God. -St. John Paul II



Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.

1 Jn 4:20

“

If every human being possesses an inalienable dignity, if all people are my brothers and sisters, and if the world truly belongs to everyone, then it matters little whether my neighbor was born in my country or elsewhere.

Fratelli Tutti, 125

”

“

I sometimes wonder why, in light of this, it took so long for the Church unequivocally to condemn slavery and various forms of violence. Today, with our developed spirituality and theology, we have no excuses.

Fratelli Tutti, 86

”

The Church, in Christ, is like a sacrament - a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of a unity among all men. The Church's first purpose is to be a sacrament of the *inner union of men with God*. Because men's communion with one another is rooted in that union with God, the Church is also a sign of the *unity of the human race*. In her, this unity is already begun, since she gathers men "from every nation, from all tribes and people and tongues", at the same time, the Church is the "sign and instrument" of the full realization of the unity to come. *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 775*

All of us who have received one and the same Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit, are in a sense blended together with one another and with God. For if Christ, together with the Father's and his own Spirit, comes to dwell in each of us, though we are many, still the Spirit is one and undivided. He binds together the spirits of each and every one of us,...and makes all appear as one in him. For just as the power of Christ's sacred flesh unites those in whom it dwells in one body, I think that in the same way the one and undivided Spirit of God, who dwells in all, leads all into spiritual unity.

St. Cyril of Alexandria - *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 738*

“

At the same time, we ask God to strengthen unity within the Church, a unity enriched by differences reconciled by the working of the Spirit. For "in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Cor 12:13), in which each member has his or her distinctive contribution to make.

Fratelli Tutti, 280

”

One Body in Christ – United Against Racism

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12 : 12-13

Most of us are familiar with the definition of Sacraments as efficacious signs of grace through which divine life is dispensed to us. As efficacious signs, the grace of the sacraments transform us and animate our Christian life. The Sacrament of Baptism is the doorway to this life in Christ. In Baptism, we receive the Holy Spirit, are washed of original sin, and become adopted sons and daughters of God. This last point is key – Baptism effectively incorporates us into the body of Christ – we become one family of God united in the Holy Spirit. Each member of the mystical body of Christ shares a common dignity and mission to bring Christ to the world.

As Catholics, we must respect and protect all people – regardless of their race, ethnic background, or religious tradition – as they were created in the image and likeness of God. In Baptism, we are given the grace we need to take up the shared responsibility to protect the dignity of all people as created and loved by God. Inspired with Baptismal grace we can use our gifts and talents to address assaults to human dignity.

Our responsibility to protect the dignity of all human life calls upon us to stand up against all personal, familial, and societal attacks on human dignity. Racism is a sin that denies each person's dignity as created in the image and likeness of God. The sin of racism can occur in each of us – in our thinking, our attitudes and even our actions. Racism can also manifest itself in groups and communities that then establish laws and practices that marginalize certain groups of people based on their race, background, or place of birth. As sons and daughters of God, responsible for defending the dignity of all, we must work to be anti-racist. Our Baptism unites us to God and makes us responsible to our brothers and sisters as we fight for the eradication of this sin of racism in our hearts, our families, our communities, and our nation.

— “ —

Therefore, the chosen People of God is one: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism"; sharing a common dignity as members from their regeneration in Christ, having the same filial grace and the same vocation to perfection; possessing in common one salvation, one hope and one undivided charity. There is, therefore, in Christ and in the Church no inequality on the basis of race or nationality, social condition or sex...
For you are all 'one' in Christ Jesus.
Lumen Gentium, 32

— ” —

— “ —

Racism is a virus that quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting.
Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 97

— ” —

Use the following words of the Baptismal promises as a reflection – bringing to light where racism is hiding in your life.

V: Do you reject Satan?

R. I do.

V. And all his works?

R. I do.

V. And all his empty promises?

R. I do.

Inspired by Grace - Promoting the Common Good

I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace...

Ephesians 4:1-3

The gift of the Holy Spirit was given to us in the Sacrament of Baptism. The Spirit is renewed and His gifts are reaffirmed in us through Confirmation – almost like a personal Pentecost. Through Confirmation, we affirm our desire to be more closely united to Christ and His body, the Church. We also accept the right and responsibility to proclaim and defend the Gospel to the world by our word and deed. The Sacrament of Confirmation highlights the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit that give grace for this mission. By invoking the Holy Spirit, we allow His promptings to move and transform us as we put these gifts into action.

— “ Confirmation... is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1316 ” —

Stemming from our common origin as beloved sons and daughters of God, we each have a responsibility to foster greater respect for the dignity of every human person and work for a world that allows all people – regardless of race, ethnic background, or country of origin – to reach their fulfillment and contribute to the good of society. We work for the common good by identifying and rejecting all instances or practices that denies a person or group of people the ability to prosper and develop as God intends.

— “ “Racism occurs because a person ignores the fundamental truth that, because all humans share a common origin, they are all brothers and sisters, all equally made in the image of God.”

Open Wide Our Hearts

Confirmation bestows the right and responsibility to defend the Gospel at all times. Promoting Gospel values means standing up against all beliefs and practices that degrade the human person – including the sin of racism. Racism denies our common origin as equally made in the image and likeness of God. Racism reflects an un-Christian disregard for the dignity of every human person. Racism stands in the way of advancement towards the common good of all. As Catholics, we are compelled to stand against the sin of racism – in our hearts, our families, and our society. This will not be easy. Let us invoke the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and ask Him to move us to act against the sin of racism wherever it is present.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit to Defend Human Dignity and Promote the Common Good

Holy Spirit, fill me with Wisdom – to see every person through God's eyes

Holy Spirit, fill me with Understanding – to comprehend God's plan of love and justice for all

Holy Spirit, fill me with Right Judgment – to seek the holy guidance to do the will of God for the good of all

Holy Spirit, fill me with Courage – to persevere in the work for justice and find strength in the face of difficulty

Holy Spirit, fill me with Knowledge – to know the great love of God for each person and through all His creation

Holy Spirit, fill me with Reverence – to pray and worship God in love and unity with those who are marginalized

Holy Spirit, fill me with Wonder and Awe – to realize the glory and power of God who is the One who most desires the unity and dignity of all.

Come, Holy Spirit, renew the face of the earth.

Amen.

Growing in Love

Doctors use charts to see how tall we are and how much we are growing. These charts measure our physical growth.



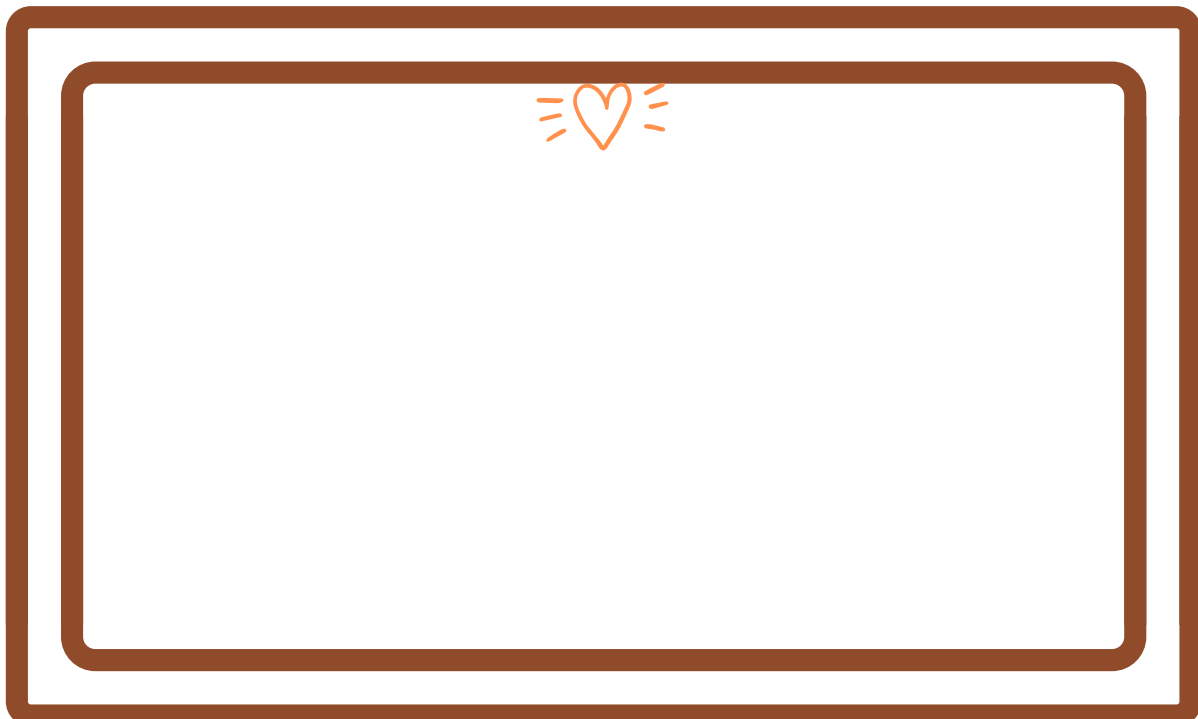
When God created us, he gave us bodies and souls. He wants us to grow both physically and spiritually. We can't really measure our spiritual growth on a chart - but we can see it in our words and actions. Our spiritual growth is measured by love - how we love God and other people. The more we love and care for God and others, the more we grow spiritually!



There are many ways to show our love for others - but they all begin with knowing that EVERY person is special and loved by God. It doesn't matter if we have different skin colors, speak different languages, or live in different countries. We are all made by God - and are perfect to Him.

Think of people you know that may be treated differently because of the way they look. What can you do to show them that you think they are important and loved by God?

Draw a picture in the box below to show how you will show that you are growing in love.



SHOW YOU CARE

*Let your care for others, start in your heart, reach your eyes,
your ears and your hands...*
Adapted from Fratelli Tutti, 194



Did you know that God created every person - EVER?

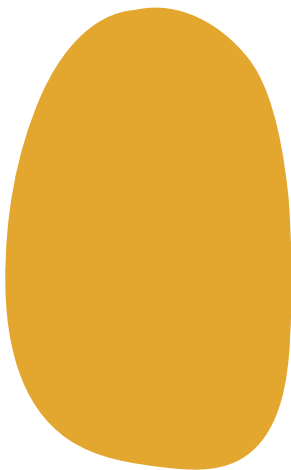
God, who created the moon and stars and the animals and plants, also created each person. Of all creation, He loves human beings the most because He made us in His image and likeness. This means that we have minds and hearts that are formed like His.

God knows each person by name and loves each of us as if we were the only person in the world. It doesn't matter if you are tall or short, have black hair or blonde, if you have white or brown skin - God made each of us perfect. Because God made us in His image, we can see with his heart the dignity of each person as He made them.

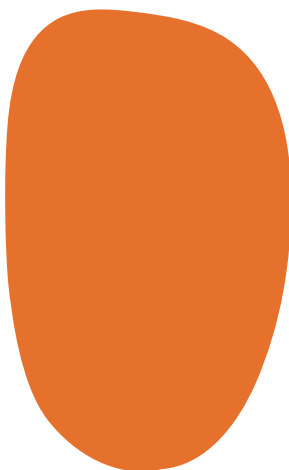
Sometimes, we don't see others as God does and we treat them like they are less important than we are because they don't look like us, speak the same language or dress like us. This is not acting with God's heart and does not respect His image in the other person. God sent us His son, Jesus to show us how to love with his heart.

Using our eyes and ears we notice that some people are not treated with dignity. When we see someone who is not treated fairly, Jesus wants our hearts and hands to help them. This week, use your eyes and ears to see places in your community where people are not treated fairly. Write what you learned either by seeing or hearing. Think about how you will act to raise up the dignity of that person, or group of people.

SEE



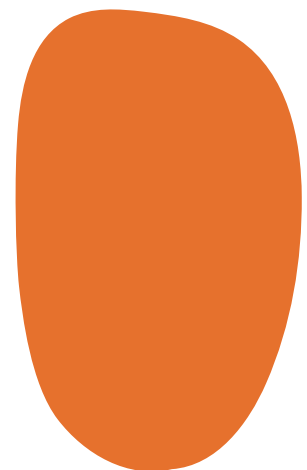
ACT



HEAR



ACT



Who is My Neighbor?

Gospel Wisdom*

*(*Wisdom is not just knowing things, it means seeing things as God sees them.
As you read the Gospel, try to read with God's eyes and heart.)*

Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan – Luke 10:25-37

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus teaches us the two greatest commandments are to love God and to love our neighbors. To love God means to keep Him at the center of our hearts and minds. The parable tells us that we should also love other people – because they are created and loved by God. This second commandment can be hard. Even the man in the story, who was a scholar, needed help understanding this commandment. He asked Jesus – ‘and, who is my neighbor?’ We sometimes think neighbors are only those people who live near us, or who are our friends. Sometimes we set limits on who we see as our neighbor because they look, sound or act differently than we do. Using wisdom, the heart of God as your guide, answer the man’s question: who is your neighbor?



Loving Our Neighbors – Respecting the Dignity of Our Brothers and Sisters

Jesus gives us the Parable of the Good Samaritan to help us understand that we must love everyone for every person is our neighbor. To summarize the parable – a Jewish man is wounded and left on the side of the road. Two people walked past the injured man. We do not know why they chose not to help the wounded man – maybe they were too busy or thought because he was a stranger he didn’t deserve their care. The third man, the Good Samaritan, does stop. He makes time to care for the stranger, even though Samaritans and Jews of this time were enemies of one another. Jesus highlights the actions of the Good Samaritan to teach us that we should care for others – especially those who are treated as less important because of race, age, or ability. When we care for others, we show that we respect the dignity that God gives every human person. When we respect the dignity of others, we show our love of God.

Every life matters to God. As Catholics trying to live the parable of the Good Samaritan, God wants us to respect and protect the dignity of every human person – regardless of their race or where they were born. It is not only wrong to believe that those who are different from us are inferior – it is a sin. Racism is a sin against God and our neighbor because it denies the person’s dignity simply because of the color of their skin, or place of birth. When we deny the dignity of a person, we deny God because he created each person in His image and likeness. This sin of racism can be seen in our actions, and in the way we think about others. Racism can happen in the heart of a person, in a school, a team, a community, and even a nation.

Take a Stand Against Racism

When have you witnessed prejudiced or racist behavior? What was your role – were you a victim, a bystander, a passer by? Did you have the courage to stand against racism? Did you walk away? Write down your thoughts. List three ways you resolve to love your neighbors – those you know and those you don’t know by name – by taking a stand against racism.

Present your list to God as you offer the words of Sister Thea Bowman as your own personal prayer.

“I want people to remember that I tried to love the Lord and that I tried to love them.”
Sister Thea Bowman

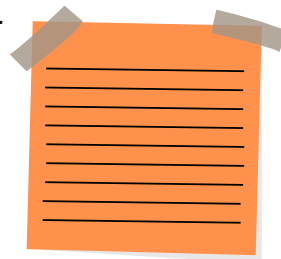
The Opposite Side

Gospel Wisdom

Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:29-33.

The parable tells of three different men who encountered a man who had been beaten, robbed and left on the side of the road. The first man who passed by was a priest, the second was a Levite – a man respected in society. Both of these important men saw the man who was hurt but did not help him. They chose not to see the injured man, in fact, they moved to the opposite side to pass by him. Though they must have seen the hurt man, they made the choice to ignore him.

Image yourself in this Gospel story. Picture yourself walking in your neighborhood – maybe on your way to school or to a friend's house – and finding someone who is hurt lying on the sidewalk. What would you do? Would you pass them by? Would you stop to see if the person is ok? Would you call for help? Write down how you would feel in this situation and what you think you would do.



Helping Those in Need – Working for the Common Good

Catholics understand the Common Good as the right of every person to sufficient access to things/resources so that they can live fulfilling lives. This means that we must work to balance personal possessions and community resources for fair distribution to everyone.

The third man in the parable is our model for how to respond – he stops to help the man in need. Jesus gives us the example of the Good Samaritan to teach us how to love and serve our others, especially those in need. Every time we show care and respect for our others we are respecting their dignity and promoting the common good. To promote the common good means to work towards creating a community in which all people can develop and flourish to their fullest potential. It is everyone's responsibility – especially those who have a home, family, daily meal, safe neighborhood and school – to work to make sure those who have less, receive their fair share of resources. In helping others, like the Good Samaritan, we make the world a more just place for all God's people.

Many factors limit people's ability to grow and flourish in society. One of the factors that limits the common good for all people is racism. The sin of racism can lead a person, community, and even a nation, to establish laws and practices that place a group of people at a disadvantage in access to their fair share of resources because of the color of their skin or place of birth. This rejects God's plan for the common good by limiting a person's ability to enrich the community through equal sharing of their talents and resources. As Christians, we are each responsible for the good of every human person. We must help support the good of our brothers and sisters by standing up for equal access to food, to shelter, to healthcare, to education, to work.

Work for the Good of the Community

One way you can work for the common good is to look at what you have – the food and clothes in your home. Do you have more than you need? You take a step for the common good when you share from the things you have. Even better, buy something for someone who has less instead of buying something you want for yourself. Remember, each of us is responsible for the good of all people – regardless of skin color, background, or situation in life. Your actions, with the actions of those around you, can make the world the just society God wants it to be.

"It is an act of justice for the rich to help the poor."
St Josephine Bakhita

Moved with Compassion

Gospel Wisdom

Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:29-34.

In this parable, Jesus tells us the Samaritan man was 'moved with compassion' when he saw the man hurt, lying on the side of the road. To have 'compassion' means to feel sympathy when you see the misfortune of others and be moved with a strong desire to ease their suffering. The Samaritan noticed the pain of the man in need. Moved with compassion, he bandaged his wounds and took care of him.

Think about a time in which you noticed the misfortune of someone. How did you show compassion for them? Write about what it felt like to help care for them.



Caring for Others with Compassion – Solidarity in Action

The Good Samaritan shows us what it means to be in solidarity with others. Solidarity is part of Catholic Social teaching – along with the dignity of the human person and the common good. Solidarity reminds us that as members of the human family, we must all take notice of injustice / needs of others and work alongside them to ease their suffering. This might seem hard, or not our problem. We may think we are not responsible for other people's suffering if we did not cause it. However, as brothers and sisters loved by God, we are responsible for one another. Jesus taught us to stand in solidarity with others who suffer in many ways – oppression, racism, poverty, illness or isolation – to raise up their dignity through our words and actions.

Throughout history, racism has caused many people to experience pain and suffering simply because of the color of their skin or where they come from. Those who have been victims of racism, or who have seen acts of racism against those in their family or community, experience great hurt. The sin of racism continues today. When enough people in a community think and act in racist ways, it becomes part of the culture. This racist culture then makes it possible to create laws and practices that put people at a disadvantage because of their skin color or place of birth. This is a very real pain that many of our brothers and sisters experience today. This must stop. Each of us must make the decision to be part of the solution. This is solidarity – taking the time to notice injustice and committing to change.

Stand In Solidarity With Others

The movie, *Just Mercy*, tells the story of a man who was accused and sentenced to death for a crime he did not commit. The following video clip explains how racism led to the injustice against Walter McMillian specifically, but also many other people of color:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_9PBKQgkQ

A first step in standing in solidarity with others is taking the time to listen to their stories. Reflect on the story of Walter McMillian, or perhaps you know of others who have experienced racism. How do you feel as you think about their stories? What can you do to stand with those who have been hurt by injustice, particularly racist words, acts, or practices?

"Compassion, my dear brother, is preferable to cleanliness. Reflect that with a little soap, I can easily clean my bed covers but even with a torrent of tears, I would never wash from my soul, the stain, that my harshness toward the unfortunate would create."
St Martin de Porres

Take Care of Him

Gospel Wisdom

Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:29-37.

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, two strangers – a Samaritan and an innkeeper – care for needs of a man who is hurt. Each one has a necessary part to do in helping the injured man get better. The Samaritan, encountering the man left of the side of the road, stops to take care of his urgent wounds. Knowing he must journey on, the Samaritan asks the innkeeper to care of the injured man by giving him shelter and food for his recovery. Working together, they use their unique gifts to care for someone in need.

God created us with our own unique gifts, and with talents and resources to share. Like the Samaritan and the innkeeper, we each are called to use what God has given us to serve – especially to serve the needs of others. Think about the gifts and resources God has given you. How can you use these gifts to serve of others?



We Each Do Our Part – The Basis of Subsidiarity

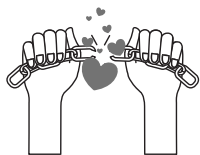
In the generosity of the Samaritan and the innkeeper, Jesus gives us a model of working for the common good for all. This Gospel highlights the Catholic principle of subsidiarity. In subsidiarity, we recognize the rights and responsibilities to care for the common good of every person. We practice subsidiarity when we share our gifts and talents, and allow others to share their gifts and talents, so that everyone can grow and flourish. We often practice this principle of subsidiarity in our families. As a family, we are each responsible for a specific chore or task in the home – one makes dinner, one fixes the table, one takes out the trash, etc. In carrying out our task, we contribute to the good of the whole family.

Subsidiarity can help us confront the evil of racism so rampant today. Too many people, or groups of people, are discriminated against based on their race, ethnic background, or place of birth. Racism can only be overcome by a commitment to love and care for the good of every human person. Though we may not have the power to eliminate the sin of racism in all people and structures, we do have a responsibility to confront discriminatory thoughts, actions and behaviors in our own lives and encourage others to do the same. Following the principle of subsidiarity, we must commit ourselves to never again use racist words, tell racist jokes, or participate in actions that diminish the dignity of another person. Subsidiarity requires that we not only stop discriminatory practices, but that we also work to create a community where everyone has equal opportunity to live, learn and grow into the person God created them to be.

Living Subsidiarity

What if, in the story of the Good Samaritan, he and the innkeeper had helped a person who had been beaten because he or she was a person of color? Rewrite the story to show how each person could live out the principle of subsidiarity to fight that instance of racism. What role would you play in that story?

"I have never felt I am a slave to any man or woman but I am a servant of Almighty God who made us all. When one of his children is in need, I am glad to be His slave."
Venerable Pierre Toussaint



Chains of Love

For "love shatters the chains that keep us isolated and separate; in their place, it builds bridges. Love enables us to create one great family, where all of us can feel at home... Love exudes compassion and dignity".

Fratelli Tutti, 62


Chains can be instruments of torture. Too often we see images of people who have been bound by physical chains. These chains not only limit a person's ability to move freely, they marginalize and isolate the individual bound by chains. Even more common are "invisible" chains that hold down persons or groups of individuals because of their race, ethnicity, country of origin or socio-economic class. These chains are as binding as those we can see. They allow us to create stereotypes and isolate group of individuals.

The chains of racism have bound are brothers and sisters for too long. Our work to end the chains of racism begins in individual hearts and transforms families. We must keep the dignity of every human person at the center of our hearts as we work to breaking the chains that marginalize any person or group of people.

Chains can also be a means to unify separate links into a stronger whole. In this family activity, you will make a paper chain that confronts chains that bind or marginalize people as you name ways that you and your family can work to break the chain of racism by creating a Chain of Love.

Making your family Chain of Love:

1. Cut strips of paper (about 2 inches wide by 8 inches long)
2. Write on one side of each strip one of the following chains of racism (or name other signs of racism you see in your community, school, workplace, etc.)
 - Ignoring a new teammate because they are a person of color
 - Laughing at a joke or comment that makes fun of another person because they speak another language
 - Having lower expectations of a co-worker because of their race or country of origin
 - Remaining silent when I see someone mistreated because of their race or ethnicity
 - Using a derogatory or unkind name against a person of a different race or country of origin
3. Turn the strip over and write a way that you will work to support a person hurt by that action, or resolve to stand against that action
4. Once you have completed numbers 2 and 3 for each link, assemble your Chain of Love by linking each strip to create a paper chain - with your action items facing outward
5. Each family member should complete their own chain to show the power of individual action
6. Connect the chains together to show the power of groups of people working together to turn the chains that divide us into chains that change the world by love
7. Place the chain in an important place in your home to remember your commitment to end the sin of racism



**HOW WONDERFUL WOULD IT
BE, EVEN AS WE DISCOVER
FAR AWAY PLANETS, TO
REDISCOVER THE NEEDS OF
BROTHERS AND SISTERS
WHO ORBIT AROUND US.**

POPE FRANCIS, FRATELLI TUTTI, 31

