

Open Wide Our Hearts

An Enduring Call to Love...
a pastoral letter against racism



WELCOME



Presented by:
Peter and Kellie Schmitz

Open Wide our Hearts: An Enduring Call to Love...

*Pray, Listen, Study, Reflect and
Respond*



“

*The Christian Community
should draw from this central,
ongoing encounter with Christ
and seek to combat racism with
love.”*

-U.S. Bishops



July 16th Agenda:



- ★ Pray - Scripture
- ★ Listen - stories
- ★ Study - What is Racism?
- ★ Reflect - Small & Large groups
- ★ Items for next week

Pray



Scripture Reading -
1 Corinthians 12: 12-14,
16-21, 24-26



A message from USCCB



Bishop Shelton Fabre

(Diocese Houma-Thibodaux, Schriever, LA)

Chair of the U.S. bishops' Ad Hoc
Committee Against Racism

Listening Sessions in Ohio & Baltimore



See Christ in our neighbors and to listen to their stories and experiences...

Several Black speakers mentioned they felt unwelcome especially during the sign of peace.

A Black priest walking in the parish garden was approached by a white man and told to leave.

A Black woman recalls a time when she was chastised for leaving mass early to catch the city bus to get to work on time.

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Study and Reflect



What is Systemic Racism?

- Racism resulting from the inherent biases and prejudices of the policies and practices of social and political organizations, groups, or institutions.

PROGRESS:

The elimination of some institutionalized racism

- slavery
- Jim Crow Laws
- Prohibitions on voting & owning land
- Separate but equal schools

CURRENT DISPARITIES btwn

Whites and Minorities:

- Unemployment
- Median wealth
- Home Ownership
- Criminal Justice System
- Voting
- Education

Racism and Economic Inequality

Median wealth for white households:

- **ten times greater** than for black households
- **eight times greater** than for Hispanic households.

Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics:

- experience poverty at roughly **twice or more than twice** the rate of whites.

Racism and Education

Minority Students Have Limited Access to Quality Education.

- ❑ Segregated schools
- ❑ Underfunded - local real estate
- ❑ Limited access to rigorous coursework
- ❑ Teachers in urban schools tend to be the least experienced
- ❑ Limited access to Early Childhood Education

Currently the demographics of students obtaining a college degree in 4-6 years:

- 62% of white students
- 45% of Latino students
- 38% of Black students
- 13% of Native Americans

Racism and Employment

- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was created to protect against illegal discrimination in the workplace.
- Yet, in 2016 the EEOC was investigating tens of thousands of racial discrimination cases.
- In the first quarter of 2018, unemployment rates were:
 - African American - 7.2%
 - Hispanic - 5.1%
 - Asian - 3.0%

Racism and Housing

U.S. Federal Housing Administration created policies in the 1950s and 1960s- **REDLINING** practice - Banks could not receive federal insurance for loans made inside these predominantly black neighborhoods.

Even with the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which was to end housing discrimination, ending segregated housing has not resulted.

Health Care Inequities

Cultural competency is necessary for a successful healthcare visit:

- providing language interpretation
- providing verbal instructions for a patient who lacks English literacy skills.

Because people of color are more likely to be employed in low-wage jobs that do not offer health coverage, they are more likely to be uninsured than white people.

Racism and Criminal Justice System

Over the past 4 decades = 500% increase in # of people incarcerated in the United States

U.S. has 5% of the world's population, but roughly has 25% of the world's prisoners

African Americans and Latinos = 56% of the U.S. prisoners and only 28% of the U.S. population.

USCCB advocates for sentencing reform:

- Increase in rehab & restorative programs
- Focus on education
- Focus on literacy
- Job-placement
- Substance Abuse Treatment

Racism and Voting

Poll taxes and literacy tests became a part of the election process.

Gerrymandering (redrawing of voting district boundaries) were used to suppress the African American vote.

Even with the Voting Rights Act of 1965, we still see many barriers to voting for People of Color:

- Photo ID Voter laws
- Voting rights of prisoners
- Restrictions on early voting
- Lack of polling & registration sites



Guidelines for Sharing

It is important that we are able to dialogue without blaming, shaming or judging.

Small Group Sharing - 10 mins

1. After listening and learning about tonight's information, what stood out the most? Why?
2. Who is my neighbor in the La Crosse area, who suffers from racial inequity? And how might they have suffered?
3. Why is racism at odds with the Christian vision for families, communities and society?



For Next Thursday:



- **Topic: Do Justice**
 - Read pps 8-16 from *Open Wide Our Hearts* letter
 - For Follow up to tonight's information, read pps 1-7 What is Racism? from *Open Wide Our Hearts* letter

You can find the resources on the
Parish Website.



Our email is **schmitzpk@gmail.com**

Wake me up Lord, so that the evil of racism finds no home within me.

Keep watch over my heart Lord, and remove from me any barriers to your grace, that may oppress and offend my brothers and sisters. Fill my spirit Lord, so that I may give services of justice and peace. Clear my mind Lord, and use it for your glory. And finally, remind us Lord that you said, “blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” Amen.