

# Open Wide Our Hearts

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



# August 6th Agenda:



- ★ Pray: Opening Prayer
- ★ Listen: Dr. Nduka
- ★ Study: USCCB Message
- ★ Reflection: Small Groups
- ★ Respond

# Pray



“

“We ask [all Catholics] to fight the evil of racism by educating themselves, reflecting on their personal thoughts and actions, listening to the experience of those who have been affected by racism, and by developing and supporting programs that help repair the damages caused by racial discrimination.”

– *U.S. bishops, Open Wide Our Hearts*





# Guidelines for Sharing

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

# Walk Humbly with God Reflection



- In small groups, we will discuss the Walk Humbly with God section (pps 20 - 32)
  - Your personal reactions
  - Reflection questions

# Small Group Sharing

1. Based on which wrongs do the bishops acknowledge the Catholic Church has been complicit in perpetuating racism? (*Acknowledging Sin*)
2. How is fighting racism part of missionary discipleship? How will an encounter with Christ help individuals combat racism? (*Open to Encounter*)
3. What is the relationship between evangelization and racism? (*Conversion of All*)



# Small Group Sharing

4. The bishops state that racism is a life issue. Why is racism a life issue?  
(*Commitment to Life*)

5. What does St. John Paul II say about the “supernatural vocation” to which we are all called? (*Going Forward*)





# Large Group Sharing



Someone in your small group, share out what you discussed.

# RESPOND



## Pray, Listen, Study, Reflect and RESPOND

Action might occur through service and relief, community development, advocacy, ethical choices and practices, or all of the above.

- How did this experience open our eyes to problems, issues and circumstances in new ways?
- Who else's voices and experiences might be important for us to listen to?
- Who else is already working to address this issue? What are they doing? What gaps are there?
- What are my strengths? What skills and expertise do I have?
- How have I experienced God's call to respond in a particular area?

# RESPOND



- Spirituality Center - Racism and the Coulee Region (series of meetings via zoom)
- La Crosse - Waking Up White (Book Study)
- Recommit to Racial Justice - Network Advocates Inspired by Catholic Sisters
- We are the Salt and Light organization - Success Stories

**What are your next steps?**

# A Message from the USCCB



**Walk Humbly with God: In this section the bishops exhort all Catholics to cooperate with God's grace to take direct and deliberate steps to help end racism.**

~ Acknowledge the Church's complicity in evil of racism.

~ All Catholics examine their hearts and repent of any sinfulness.

~ Call to build relationships with others from different backgrounds.

~ Resolve to work for justice interpersonally and beyond.

~ Reflect on racism as a life issue.

~ Pray for the intercession of Mary to overcome the evil of racism and build a just society.

## A healing beatitude

*Blessed are you who are willing to engage in a sincere conversation about race.*

*Blessed are you who embrace your Black sisters and brothers in the fight for social justice.*

*Blessed are you who are willing to be uncomfortable for the sake of healing our society.*

*Blessed are you who ask your bishop about racial equity training and programming in your diocese.*

*Blessed are you who pray to end racism as a pro-life issue.*

*Amen*

(adapted from [uscatholic.org](http://uscatholic.org))

You can find the resources on the  
**Parish Website.**



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