

INFO ALERT 144

October 16, 2018

"Racism today is the ultimate evil in the world." - Pope Francis

*"Any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable. Racism is not merely **one sin** among many, it is a radical evil, dividing the human family." Catechism of Cath. Ch.*

Education: How appropriate to announce racism as our focus for this year as we celebrate Respect Life Month. The CST Principle of the "Dignity of the Human Person," a key theme at the heart of the Catholic social tradition, dictates our team's focus each year. This year, recognizing racism and identifying its devastating aspects against a person's dignity challenges us IHM's to admit racism's evil and commit ourselves to heal its widespread consequences.

As we learn about the tentacles of racism this year, we can act to heal its pervasive presence.

Rightly called America's original sin, racism remains a blot on our national life, causing acts and attitudes of hatred, as recent events have shown. The need to condemn and combat the demonic ideologies of white supremacy, neo-Nazism and racism is critical. Our efforts must always be accompanied by **prayer** and **concrete action**. The signs of this time call us to wake up, to stand up, and to speak when we see racism. Thus we show how we love our neighbor and begin healing racism in ourselves, our congregation, our land. **Each future alert will explore different aspects of this pervading horror.**

Racism exists in a variety of forms, both subtle and covert. Besides individual racism, widespread violations against respect of the individual and the common good flow from institutional, systemic, economic racism. **Some specific signs of racism include the following:** exclusion from voting rights, from sharing in basic needs (food, housing, work), alarming escalating numbers of the poor (non-living wages etc.), inadequate education due to poor schools, disregard for care of creation, abuse of workers, of women and children, trafficking, restrictions on housing, on and on . . .

Abuse of voting rights: extremely threatening to people of color, as shown in gerrymandering, reducing the number of polling places in poor areas, and creating new ID demands. Gerrymandering, dating back to 1812, changes the districting lines to keep a party in power. This has led, 206 years later, to the party in power being able to retain power, even without the majority support of residents.

Richard Rohr states clearly that "**voting is a deeply moral act**. By abusing the right of citizens to vote, elections are given to the rule of money and lobbyists. Voting is a decisive act of Christian faith that I matter, society matters, justice matters, and others matter." (*Rohr in Sojourners, Nov. 2018*)

The Catechism of the CC states "Political rights [esp. voting] are meant to be exercised for the common good of the nation and the human community." The Second Vatican Council warns, "Political parties should foster whatever they judge necessary for the common good of the nation and of the human family."

Prayer: God of heaven and earth, in creating the one human family, you endowed each person with dignity. Help us to overcome the sin of racism. Grant us your grace in eliminating this blight from our hearts, our communities, our social and civil institutions. Open our eyes, O Lord, to see the injustices in our voting system. Grace our spirits, O Lord; help us develop the vision we need to transform unjust systems and structures that undermine the right to vote. O Lord, help us work with joy and determination to co-create with You a just, peaceful society where everyone can contribute to the common good by exercising their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

May the darkness of these days give way to Your light so that we may live as your beloved children. Amen

Upcoming Events: 1. Nuns on the Bus coming to Philly on Oct. 24 and 25 for their fifth tour in working for the common good--this year a "Truth Tour" on the tax bill (info@networklobby.org)

If you or your ministry are willing to help Phila. Archdiocesan CSS Refugee Resettlement Services welcome refugee families from Nigeria, Ukraine, Afghanistan, etc., send checks or gift cards (Acme, Walmart, etc.) to:

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