

# Open Wide Our Hearts

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



# July 30th Agenda:



- ★ Pray: CCC
- ★ Listen: Guest Speaker
- ★ Study & Reflect: Unconscious Perceptions & Reflections
- ★ Closing Prayer
- ★ Items for next week

# Pray



Reading from the  
Catechism of the  
Catholic Church - 814



# Whole Group Activity



## Unconscious Word Association





TRICK





# Development of Stereotypes

Stereotypes develop in the way we process information - which can be influenced by family, friends, social media, TV, music, etc.

“Implicit bias” - develop from a human need to process an abundance of information quickly in order to make quick decisions. To process that information more efficiently, the brain uses shortcuts to find connections between bits of information.

# Implicit Bias

The USCCB writes: “Consciously or subconsciously, this attitude of superiority can be seen in how certain groups of people are vilified, called criminals, or are perceived as being unable to contribute to society, even unworthy of its benefits.”

Example: [Video of doctor speaking about implicit bias](#)

# Exploring How Bias Becomes Ingrained



- As you watch your favorite TV shows or movies, identify and discuss any racial stereotypes you notice.
- How are people of various racial backgrounds portrayed?
  - How might these stereotypes contribute to our biases?

- Though stereotypes are often formed subconsciously, we can actively work to overcome them if we educate ourselves.
- We can also think about the media we consume.
- What media sources are frequented by people from other ethnic backgrounds?

# What Can I Do?



Pay attention to your thinking and look for patterns or generalizations that surface by default.

Consciously consider if a thought is grounded in fact or simply an example of unconscious bias.

Friendships and relationships are the best antidote for bias.

It is incumbent on you to seek out opportunities for relationship building AND NOT upon the person of color.

**“Your first thought does not need to be your last thought.”**



# Guidelines for Sharing

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

# Small Group Sharing

1. In what ways does combatting racism require overcoming racial prejudice *and* challenging social structures that subtly embody and reinforce racism?
2. How do the stories of Ven. Augustus Tolton and St. Katharine Drexel inspire or challenge you? How can you follow their example in your own journey to be a disciple of Christ?



# Love Goodness Reflection



- In small groups, we will discuss the Love Goodness section (pps 16 - 20)
  - Your personal reactions
  - Reflection questions

# Examination of Conscience



## Why an Examination of Conscience?

Conscience is the “core and sanctuary” within us where we are alone with God and hear his call to “love good and avoid evil”. (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 16)

Pope Benedict XVI quote

For Next Thursday:



- Topic: Walk Humbly with God
  - Read pps 20-32 from *Open Wide Our Hearts* letter
  - Take time to reflect upon the Examination of Conscience for Racial Justice

# Closing Prayer

God of Heaven and Earth, you created the one human family and endowed each person with great dignity.

Aid us, we pray, in overcoming the sin of racism. Grant us your grace in eliminating this blight from our hearts, our communities, our social and civil institutions.

Fill our hearts with love for you and our neighbor so that we may work with you in healing our land from racial injustice. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

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



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