

Association of US Catholic Priests
Anti-racism Subcommittee

Year 3 Task: Dismantle Structural and Deeply Systemic Racism in our American Society

A.) *Self-educate: Identify the structural components of racism and white supremacy in this American society today

1. Seek out racialized groups living on the margins of your community.
2. Learn what current and historical factors caused these groups to live segregated from the larger community. Examples: housing injustices including redlining and deed restrictions/covenants, white flight, zoning regulations depressing housing values, under-resourced schools, lack of jobs, lack of public transportation.
3. Consult the provided resource list to find books, videos and articles about systemically racist practices and policies in the US.
4. Many Catholic and secular colleges and universities provide virtual workshops, webinars and presentations on racism. Search out opportunities to participate.
5. Examine the voting records of your local, state and federal level elected officials to learn of their support for or efforts to mitigate legislation that promotes racial disparity.
6. Question how much diversity is found in your local, state and federal leadership bodies.
 - a. Are constituent groups in your community that are made up primarily of Black people, Native people, and Asian American people represented in local, state and federal governmental bodies by people from those groups?
 - b. If not, why not?
 - c. If not, have their representatives demonstrated that they are invested in *all* of their constituents' needs?
7. Study voting legislation passed or proposed in your state since the 2020 election.
 - a. Has legislation made it easier or harder for racialized and marginalized groups in your community to vote, including people of color, poor people, elders, and disabled people?

- b. Does the passed or proposed legislation impact the people in communities of color more than white communities?
 - c. What was the stated motive for this recently passed or proposed legislation? If it was for voter integrity, was there any credible evidence in your community or state that there was voter fraud in the 2020 general election?
- 8. Learn the language of racism. Rhetoric can be clearly or subtly racist.
 - a. An example of subtle racism is the use of *dog whistles*: coded language in political messaging to attract support from a particular group without provoking opposition to alert their intended audience to their racist appeal.
 - b. Learn about *white supremacy* and the *great replacement theory*, and the connection of these concepts to domestic terrorism.
- 9. Learn about the history of Black English or African American Vernacular English, which is a valid cultural expression. Learn about the suppression and theft of the languages of Native People at residential schools in the US and Canada.
- 10. Read the following:
 - a. Read: [*Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*](#), Isabel Wilkerson
 - b. Read: [*From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the Twenty-First Century*](#), William Darity
 - c. Read: [*An Indigenous People's History of the United States*](#), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
 - d. Read: [*Pagans in the Promised Land: Decoding the Doctrine of Christian Discovery*](#). Steven Newcomb, and watch the accompanying video: [*Steve Newcomb - Doctrine of Discovery. the Domination Code*](#)

*See also the accompanying list of resources.

B.) Self-examine: Acknowledge all areas in which one has benefited and actively upheld the structural practices of the sin of racism in our society today.

- 1. Identify any and all activities in which you have participated or supported, or mitigating activities that you avoided, to maintain racial disparity in your own community and in the greater society.

2. Acknowledge how much your own political position on community-wide and national issues has supported racist rhetoric and practices alive in our local and national conversation today.
3. Admit to how much you have actively engaged in or purposely avoided participation in anti-racism and anti-injustice activities taking place in your own communities.
4. Determine if you are willing to change your own thinking and attitudes about racialized people, especially if you have had no contact or engagement with those groups, and are likely to have only sporadic engagement in the future.
5. Determine how willing you are to intervene in a situation, and what actions you would take, to stop racist behavior - in a conversation or discussion, in an incident in a public place, witnessing a traffic stop, in a march or protest in which you are participating.
6. Read: [*So You Want to Talk About Race*](#), Ijeoma Oluo

C.) Self Activate: Take definitive steps to expose and correct systemic racism in all areas of American society today.

1. Pray to the Holy Spirit to give you the courage, understanding and commitment to do the following action steps for the sake of God's kingdom.
2. Anti-racism work is intense and arduous, and can be confrontational and frustrating. Look for like-minded individuals and groups in your community who will accompany, support and guide you in this effort. Consider discussion groups, book groups, social justice training workshops, support groups.
3. Seek out opportunities to participate in and support community-wide events that engage with and support racialized people, including festivals, marches, walks, worship services, interfaith gatherings, discussion groups, panels and presentations.
4. Join/support local organizations that are serving the needs of racialized groups, as well as national groups and their local chapters, like the [Urban League](#), [NAACP](#), [ACLU](#), [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#), [NETWORK Advocates for Catholic Social Justice](#), [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), [The Poor People's Campaign](#), [International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs](#), [Cultural Survival](#), [Indian Law Resource Center](#), [Native American Rights Fund](#), [Native Governance Center](#), [Asian Americans Advancing Justice](#), [National Council of Asian Pacific Americans](#), [Unidos US](#), [League of United Latin American Citizens \(LULAC\)](#), [Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund](#), [Hispanic Institute](#),

[Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund](#), [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#), [Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership \(CAPAL\)](#), [Asian Americans Advancing Justice](#)

5. Track the voting records of your political leaders, locally and nationally, and call, email or write them to let them know that you vote for candidates who work to dismantle deeply structural racism in our government workings.
 - a. Tell them you know their votes impact people in racialized groups, and you will not support public officials who vote against the needs of their BIPOC constituents on such issues as: voting rights, housing, healthcare, education, student debt, the carceral system, bail reform, law enforcement accountability, broadband access, living wage, taxes, tax credits, paid family leave, substance abuse disorder treatment, environmental justice, zoning regulations.
 - b. Attend your public officials' town hall meetings and hold them accountable for their positions that negatively impact their marginalized constituents by asking pointed questions and demanding answers and explanations.
6. In whatever areas you currently operate, and within those groups in which you work, identify, expose and address, (one on one, and with the whole group) any practices, policies and decision-making that perpetuate the structural and systemic racism that exists.
 - a. Prepare for times in which you will be confronted with racist statements, practices or policies. Consider ahead of time how you can respond calmly and be able to extend the grace of positive intention to those participating in racist behavior.
7. Read the following
 - a. [A White Catholic's Guide to Racism and Privilege](#), Dan Horan, OFM
 - b. [How to Be an Antiracist](#), Ibram X. Kendi

D.) Self-evaluate: How anti-racist and anti-injustice were you in doing these action steps and what results did you get?

1. Determine if, at any level of discomfort you felt in taking these steps, you allowed the discomfort to prevent you from doing the action steps.
2. In encountering any negative reactions to your efforts to be anti-racist, evaluate your response in addressing the sin of racism that continues to exist.

3. Admit to how much or how little you bring up the issues of racism and injustice with your colleagues and family members.

E.) Self-report: Share openly and honestly with others what successes and/or failures you had in doing these action steps

1. Bring your efforts to take action (or your choice to not take action) before God and seek His grace to overcome any obstacles you may be facing - either from within or from without.
2. Allow others to hold you accountable for how much you acted or failed to act in these areas of dismantling racial injustice in this American society.
3. Share openly with others your own efforts to combat racism and injustice in this American society, encouraging them to do the same.