



GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#115 - July 2020

A Best Practice: Responding to Today's Call

Even in the midst of the challenges of COVID-19, you might have your plans in places for this year's adult faith formation endeavors. Is it time to re-look at them, discerning where and how they are meeting today's needs?

Some **GEMS** readers have commented:

- “Our most successful programs are in response to what was happening in ‘popular, everyday’ culture – the needs of the people.”
- “What people need are responses/help to what is happening in their lives, our nation's life, our Church's life which, perhaps, we didn't know was going to happen when we set our long-range goals and plans for the current year.”
- “Catholic Christians need to find ways to deal with social justice issues and the anxieties and questions that hang over them from the events we are mired in. The Church - the people who are the Church - are needed now more than ever to get involved in today's questions and issues which touch (and sometimes threaten) the dignity of each and every person. No one should ever point a finger at a person of faith and ask that question, ‘What did you do to create a better world, to bring about change during times of turmoil?’ The answer to that question should be obvious.”

Paying attention to the signs and needs of the time requires that our attention, of course, is constant and continual. In the last several month, we find ourselves (again) in a situation that cannot – can never – be ignored because of who we are as humans, as Catholic Christians.

GEMS readers live throughout the world; from the demonstrations across the planet, it is obvious that the issue of racial justice is universal.

Why?

Why does this issue need to be an integral part of adult faith formation? During the week of the death of George Floyd, a group of young adults asked their pastor what he was going to preach about the following week-end. He replied, “I'm going to stick to the Scriptures.” They asked, “You're not going

to relate the readings to what's happening in our world?” He answered, “I don't know enough; I wouldn't know what to say.”

It has been said that the heresy of our time is the disconnect between faith and everyday life. Our Baptismal promises call us to pray, to preach, to live with the Scriptures in one hand and the daily newspaper (internet) in the other hand.

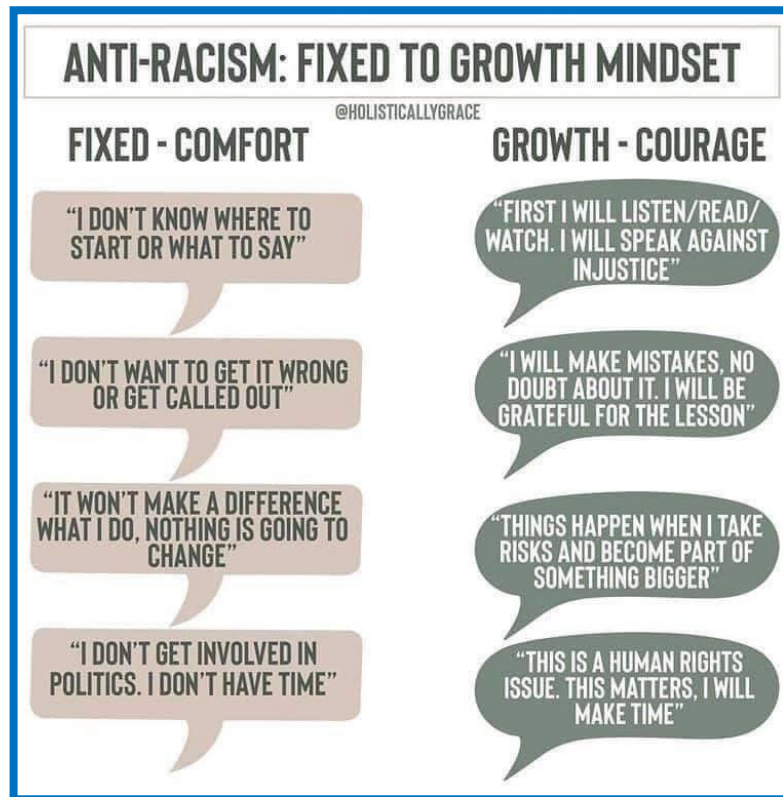
Daniel P. Horan, OFM recently commented, “The first responsibility of white people is to educate ourselves. It is not the responsibility of your friend, or family member, or neighbor, or co-worker, or stranger of color to (a) explain racism to you nor (b) do so in a way you feel comfortable. You'll be uncomfortable.”



The role of adult faith formation is to encourage and empower us to understand, to think critically, and to live as disciples of Jesus. If this year's

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plans (and the years to come) for adult faith formation do not include ways of deepened awareness and responses to the reality of racism, we are missing the mark.



What, then, are some possible formational responses in our parishes and (arch)dioceses (now and for all issues of today's concerns). Think, too, of how these can be done face-to-face as well as virtually.

- Continual pastoral staff prayer, reading and discussions
- Specific prayer for the dignity/respect of all, unity and peace at all liturgies and parish/(arch)diocesan gatherings
- Parish Evening Prayer for respect for diversity, justice, unity, and peace

- Mediated theological reflection groups on the issues of today, beginning and ending with prayer
- Book clubs
- Movie Nights
- Infuse Catholic Social Teaching – and its challenges for human dignity, respect, unity and peace - in all adult faith formation efforts
- Encourage independent reading/study
- Include case study activities in adult formation opportunities
- Listening to the voices/experiences of those who are oppressed
- Conversation circles around a focused topic related to today's challenges with the goal of a safe space for people to share their feelings, their thoughts and concerns – and why; beginning with and ending in prayer to ground the participants for action
- Question of the Week
- Fishbowl discussions
- Round-table discussions
- Study Circles
- Listening Circles:
<http://www.co-intelligence.org/P-listeningcircles.html>
- World Café Method Discussions: <http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method>
- Newspaper Prayers
- Blessings and prayers from other cultures and traditions
- Community action groups
- Fieldtrips
- Social activities and Outreach/Service Opportunities which connect people with others from different cultures, different religions, etc.

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The following resources might be of assistance in the above possibilities – as well as spark additional study and actions for parishes and (arch)dioceses

Statements from the Church:

- [Pope prays for U.S., calls racism a pro-life issue](#)
- [Pope prays for George Floyd, says turning 'blind eye' to racism is intolerable](#)
- [Statement of U.S. Bishop Chairmen in Wake of Death of George Floyd and National Protests](#)
- [Open Wide our Hearts](#) (pastoral letter against racism)
- [USCCB Resources](#)
- [Combatting Racism – Parish Resources](#) (USCCB)
- [Catholic responses to the killing of George Floyd](#)
- [Pope Francis and U.S. Bishops Respond to George Floyd's Killing](#) (a YouTube video)
- [El Paso's Bishop Mark Seitz: Black lives matter](#)
- [Wilton Gregory on Georgetown panel talks racism and police brutality after George Floyd killing](#)
- [Floyd's death demands examination of conscience, Archbishop Hebda says](#)
- [How can Catholics help bridge our nation's racial divide?](#) (Bishop Edward K. Braxton)
- [US Cardinal leads liturgy in Rome in solidarity with Floyd protests](#)
- [21st Century Lynchings in America: Our Red Record Statement Issued by the National Black Sisters' Conference](#)

“

Racism is not a thing of the past or simply a throwaway political issue to be bandied about when convenient. It is a real and present danger that must be met head on.

People of good conscience must never turn a blind eye when citizens are being deprived of their human dignity and even their lives. Indifference is not an option.

“As bishops, we unequivocally state that racism is a life issue.”

—STATEMENT OF U.S. BISHOP CHAIRMEN
IN WAKE OF DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD
AND NATIONAL PROTESTS



Articles

- [The assumptions of white privilege and what we can do about it](#)
- [Race and Religion](#) (Monsignor Ray East)
- [To fight racism, Catholics must hunger for justice like we do for the Eucharist](#)
- [75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice](#)
- [Racism is the temptation white people have yet to overcome](#)
- [Tips for Creating Effective White Caucus Groups](#) developed by Craig Elliott PhD

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- [Where do I donate? Why is the uprising violent? Should I go protest?](#) by Courtney Martin (June 1, 2020)
- [What Will It Take to Bridge Our Differences?](#)
- [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Knapsack Peggy McIntosh](#)
- [Catholic Social Teaching and Racism](#)
- [Lament and Love: Becoming Antiracist](#)
- [Catholic Social Teaching on Racism: From Examination of Conscience to Examination of Culture](#)
- [A Guide to the Discussion You Are Scared to Have Right Now](#)
- [Working for Justice Means Taking Sides](#)
- [Thirty articles on nonviolent protest](#)
- [158 Resources to Understand Racism in America](#)
- [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)
- [A Few Thoughts on Racism](#)
- [Becoming Instruments of Peace in Times of Hatred: Go and Do Likewise](#)
- [A letter to Roy. He's the black guy in my pictures.](#)
- [An anti-racism reading list from NCR](#)
- [Faith in Action: Resources for Today's Anti-Racist Catholic](#) (Busted Halo)
- [How Catholics can work for racial justice](#)
- [Racism in pollution and policing: A conversation with Robert Bullard, father of environmental justice](#)
- [This History is Long; This History Is Deep](#)
- [Racism: Change of Heart](#)
- [The Arc of Racial Injustice](#)
- [What Would Jesus Do Today? Protest](#)
- [‘A Real Wake-Up Call’: Father Bryan Massingale on Racism and the Way Forward](#) (Podcast on Busted Halo)
- [Brené Brown with Ibram X. Kendi on How to Be an Antiracist](#)
- [How does systemic racism shape health care in the U.S.?](#)
- [Our National Conversation about Conversations about Race](#)
- [Ending Racism in America](#) with Fr. Joshua Johnson and Sr. Josephine Garrett, C.S.F.N.
- [Race Issues and the Christian Response](#)
- [Code Switch \(NPR\)](#)
- [Momentum: A Race Forward Podcast](#)
- [Pod For The Cause](#) (from The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights)
- [Art, Racism, and the Problem of White Jesus](#)
- [Pod Save the People \(Crooked Media\)](#)
- [What Is White Privilege, Really?](#)
- [Beyond Protests: 5 More Ways To Channel Anger Into Action To Fight Racism](#)
- [#AllLivesMatter: A Theology Of Generic Humanity](#)
- [Required reading: A Black Catholic syllabus](#) (A list compiled by *US Catholic*)
- [For our White Friends Desiring to be Allies](#)
- [Prayer is Essential. Protest is Required. Policy is Necessary.](#) (Jim Wallis)
- [Native Americans Want to be Included in Race Talks](#)

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- [How Challenging Stereotypes Can Save Black Lives](#)
- [Saints who fought racism](#)

Arguments always begin with an answer in mind.
Conversations begin with a question.

- *Unknown*

Some Resources:

- USCCB Racism Task Force: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/racism-task-force-report-20161110-peace-in-our-communities.pdf>
- [Various resources from USCCB](#)
- [Open Wide our Hearts](#): USCCB pastoral letter on racism
- The Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center has designed [Open Wide Our Hearts - the enduring call to love](#), a four-session process on the USCCB Pastoral on Racism. Recognizing that “racism still profoundly affects our culture,” the US bishops call us to “a genuine conversion of heart, a conversion that will compel change, and the reform of our institutions and society.”

The Study Guide is designed to enable faith communities to understand individual and systemic racism; to listen to the stories of our brothers and sisters and be moved to restore right relationships; to unpack white privilege; and to work to end racism.

- [10 Ways to Fight Hate](#) (revised edition)
- [Eight Ways to Stand Up to Hate](#)
- [Anti-Racism Resources](#)
- [Christians and Racial Justice: A Discussion Guide](#)

- [Ways your Congregation Can Act Now for Racial Justice](#)
- [Racial Reconciliation Resources](#)
- [National Museum of African American History and Culture Releases “Talking About Race” Web Portal](#)
- [Seven Last Words of the Unarmed](#)
- [Resources for Unlearning and Transforming Racism](#)
- [Sacred Ground](#) is a film- and readings-based dialogue series on race, grounded in faith. Small groups are invited to walk through chapters of America’s history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional identity. The 10-part series is built around an online curriculum of documentary films and readings that focus on Indigenous, Black, Latino, and Asian/Pacific American histories as they intersect with European American histories.
- [GCORR Real Talk](#) is a series of conversations with community and faith leaders to discuss and uncover the disparities of race, ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic status that are deeply embedded in our social fabric.
- [Vital Conversations 1: Realities of Race and Racism](#) is a video-based series featuring contemporary theologians, sociologists, laity, clergy, and other thought-leaders dealing with challenges of race, culture, and oppression in the Church and world today. There are seven sessions in [Series 1](#), eight in [Series 2](#), 14 in [Series 3](#), and 11 in [Series 4](#). These series are created by the General Commission on Religion and Race, an agency within the United Methodist Church. The videos are free for use and each session includes a discussion guide.
- [White Privilege: Let’s Talk—A Resource for Transformational Dialogue](#) is an adult curriculum designed to invite people to engage in safe, meaningful, substantive, and bold conversations on race. Divided into four focused parts, each one introduces a different aspect of the dynamic of white privilege: The Spiritual Autobiography Told Through the Lens of Race, Whiteness as the Norm: Five Loci of Insights on the Binary of Light/Dark and Black/White, The Cash Value of Whiteness or Whiteness as a Tax-Exempt Status, and On

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Becoming an Ally. Authors share their personal experiences and diverse views on each topic. There is a good deal of scripture and reflections on church experience throughout the materials. There are questions with each chapter to help facilitate meaningful conversation in church contexts.

- [One Body, Many Members](#) is a faith-based journey of discovery to learn, share and proclaim God's intention of oneness among people of every racial, ethnic and class background. How do we find that unity in a world as diverse as ours? How can we build up "one body" as strong as that? These materials will lead people through the lands of race, culture and class in the United States, to meet God every step of the way.
- [Resources & Tools Regarding Racism and Anti-Blackness](#)
- [Anti-Racist Resources from Greater Good](#)
- [How to Talk About Racism](#) (NFCYM)
- These short, [free online exercises](#) can help identify your unconscious prejudices
- [Resources to Support Anti-Racist Learning](#)
- [How Long, O Lord? Essays and Resources addressing Racism](#)
- [The Racial Wealth and Income Gap](#)
- [Recommit to Racial Justice](#)
- [Bridging Differences Playbook](#)
- [Be the Bridge](#)
- [Resources for Unlearning and Transforming Racism](#)
- [Resources for White People to Learn and Talk About Race and Racism](#)
- [Anti-Racism Resources](#)

When it comes to racism, there is only one side:
to stand against it.

- Cardinal Blase Cupich,
Archdiocese of Chicago

Some Books that Might Be Used in Book Clubs

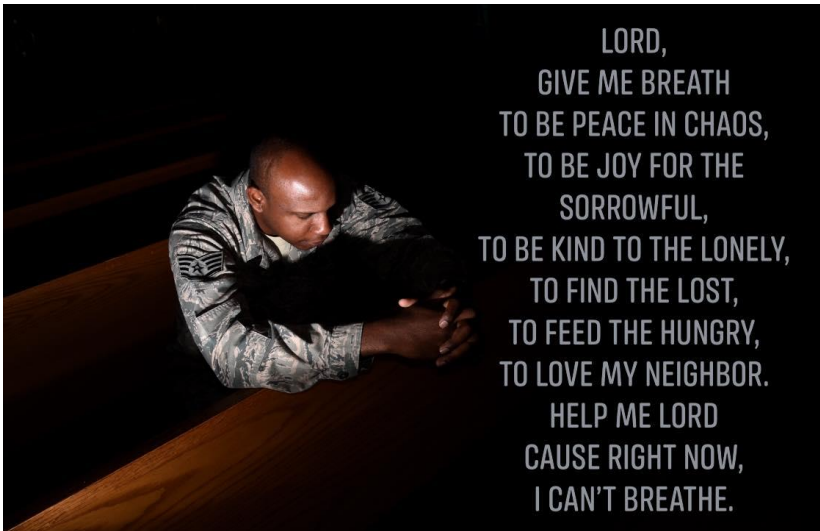
- *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America Is Tearing Us Apart* by Bill Bishop
- *Small Great Things* by Jody Picoult
- *The Warmth of Other Suns* by I. Wilkerson
- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by M. Alexander
- *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson
- *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* by Bryan N. Massingale
- *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race* by Derald Wing Sue
- *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *A Colony in a Nation* by Chris Hayes
- *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi
- *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-first Century* by Dorothy Roberts
- *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-century America* by Ira Katznelson
- *Towards the Other America: [Anti-Racist Resources for White People: Taking Action for Black Lives Matter](#)* (free e-book)

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- *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America* by Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey
- *Storming Caesars Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* by Annelise Orleck
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou
- *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo, PhD
- [Educational Books on Fighting Racism](#)
- [This List Of Books, Films And Podcasts About Racism Is A Start, Not A Panacea](#)
- [U of M Press Uploads 22 Racial Justice Books for Free](#)
- [Book Club Kit: 'White Fragility' by Robin DiAngelo](#)

Videos, Films and TV series

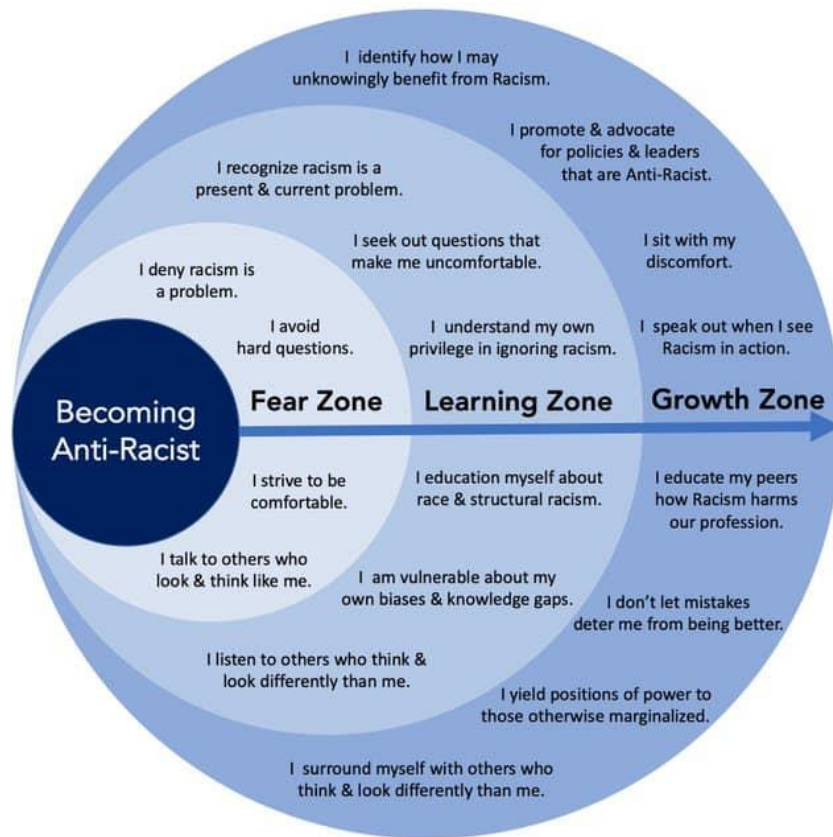
- 13th (Ava DuVernay) - Netflix
- American Son (Kenny Leon) - Netflix
- Black Power Mixtape: 1967-1975 - Available to rent
- Blindspotting (Carlos López Estrada) - Hulu with Cinemax or available to rent
- Clemency (Chinonye Chukwu) - Available to rent
- Dear White People (Justin Simien) - Netflix
- Fruitvale Station (Ryan Coogler) - Available to rent
- I Am Not Your Negro (James Baldwin doc) - Available to rent or on Kanopy
- If Beale Street Could Talk (Barry Jenkins) - Hulu
- Just Mercy (Destin Daniel Cretton) - Available to rent
- King In The Wilderness - HBO
- See You Yesterday (Stefon Bristol) - Netflix
- Selma (Ava DuVernay) - Available to rent
- The Hate U Give (George Tillman Jr.) - Hulu with Cinemax
- When They See Us (Ava DuVernay) - Netflix
- Theology and Racial Justice:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14Qy8dn0hRU>
- [Sr Thea Bowman Speech to US Catholic Bishops 1989](#)
- [Two Spiritual Perspectives on Race](#)
- [Being Black and Catholic: A Reflection](#)
- [Holy Post - Race in America](#)
- [How racial bias works -- and how to disrupt it](#) (TED talk)
- [White Privilege](#) (YouTube conversation with Dr. Robin DiAngelo, moderated by Dr. Marcus Campbell)
- Spirituality and Racial Justice:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6V-EzW7HoRo>



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- Catholic Social Teaching and Racism:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osI-73hwPVg>
 - Where Do We Go From Here?
 - [Part 1](#)
 - [Part II](#)
 - [On Race and Faith](#)
 - [The Talk - Race in America](#) (a PBS two-hour documentary about the increasingly necessary conversation taking place in homes and communities across the country between parents of color and their children, especially sons, about how to behave if they are ever stopped by the police)
 - ["What Is Systemic Racism?"](#) is an 8-part video series (each video one minute) that shows how racism shows up in our lives across institutions and society: Wealth Gap, Employment, Housing Discrimination, Government Surveillance, Incarceration, Drug Arrests, Immigration Arrests, Infant Mortality.
 - [Coming Together: Two Reflections--"The Ghosts of Hate" and "The Reforming Power of the Gospel"](#)
 - [Fr. Bryan Massingale: How the church can combat racism and white privilege](#)
 - [A Conversation on Race and Privilege](#) with Angela Davis and Jane Elliott
 - [29 Movies, Shows, and Documentaries to Watch to Educate Yourself on Racial Injustice](#)
 - [California's Catholic Dioceses Create Virtual Stations Of The Cross As A Way To Fight Racism](#)
 - [A Vigil for Racial Justice after the murder of George Floyd](#) (Benedictine Sisters of Erie)
 - [Prayers](#) and articles from Profiles in Catholicism
 - [Prayer to Overcome Racism](#)
 - [An Examen for Racism](#)
 - [A healing beatitude](#)
 - [Shaking Hands](#)
 - [There We are in the World Together](#)
 - [Praying for Justice: A Lectionary of Christian Concern](#)
 - [The Prayer of St. Francis in your Neighborhood](#)
 - [Lift Every Voice](#)
 - [A Language of the Heart by Kathy Sherman, CSJ](#)
 - [From the Many, Make Us One](#)
 - [Christ, Be Our Light](#)
 - [We Will Rise](#)
 - [Songs of Peace and Unity](#)
 - [Holy Breath of God](#)
 - [Start Right Here](#)
 - [Goodness is Stronger than Evil](#)
 - [Wage Peace](#) by Lori True
 - [Peace Prayer of Saint Francis](#)
 - [Tiny Prayers for Protests](#)
 - [3-Minute Retreat: Seeking Justice](#)
- Prayer, Reflection and Music Suggestions**
- [Black & Catholic Prayer of Lament and Hope](#)
 - [How to Fight Racism Through Inner Work](#)
 - [Making a Difference](#)

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Resources for families and children/youth

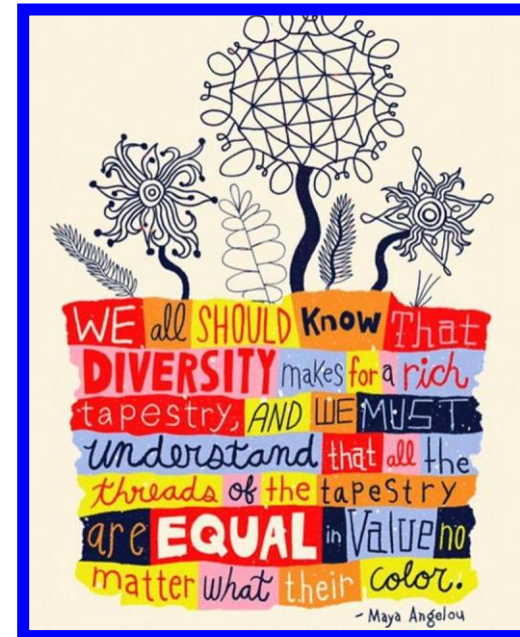
- Books:
 - [Coretta Scott King Book Award Winners: books for children and young adults](#)
 - [31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance](#)
 - [22 Books That Teach Young Kids About Diversity, Inclusion, and Equality](#)

- [Everyone Belongs: An Illustrated Children's Book Addressing Racism](#)
- [Talking to Kids About Racism, Early and Often](#)
- [20 Children's Books to Help Foster Conversations on Race](#)
- [30 books to help you talk to your kids about racism](#)
- [A Diverse #Summer Reading List For Kids](#)
- [28 great Black History Month books for kids](#)
- [24 Children's Books To Read To Your Kids In Honor Of Black History Month And year-round, of course](#)
- [These Books Can Help You Explain Racism and Protest to Your Kids](#)
- Articles and resources:
 - [PBS's Teaching Your Child About Black History Month](#)
 - [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup from Pretty Good](#)
 - [Common Sense Media Resources About Race and Racism](#)
 - [What Catholics should know about raising white kids](#)
 - [The Conscious Kid](#)
 - [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup](#)
 - [When Are Kids Old Enough to Talk About Racism? \(video\)](#)
 - [How to Overcome the Fear of Talking to Your Kids About Race \(video\)](#)
 - [21 Anti-Racism Videos To Share With Kids](#)

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Resources for Catechists and Parish Ministers

- [Talking About Race and Racism with Children](#)
- [Coming Together: Talking with Kids and Teens about Racism](#)
- [Understanding Racism](#)
- [Creating Justice: Catholic Social Teaching for Today's World](#)
- [Step: An Opportunity To Watch And Reflect With Youth](#)
- [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Resources for Classrooms](#)
- [Promoting Peace PowerPoint](#)
- [Beyond the Book Club: Anti-Racist Children and Family Ministry](#)
- [Raising Race Conscious Children](#)
- [How to Talk about Race](#)
- [Coming Together: Talking with Kids and Teens about Racism](#) (video, PowerPoint and resources from Association of Catholic Publishers)
- [Resources to Support Anti-Racist Learning](#)
- [Anti-Racism Resources for Catechesis & Catholic Faith Formation](#)
- [Let's Talk!](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance](#)
- [Diversity Chain](#)
- [To Act Justly: Introducing Catholic Social Teaching to Children with Stories and Activities: Through Stories and Activities](#)
- [Teaching Kids to Care](#)
- [Teaching Kids to Respect Others](#)
- [The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb](#)
- [Teaching Materials](#)



Organizations/sites that might be consulted for ongoing reflections/resources:

- Pax Christi: <https://paxchristiusa.org/about/>
- Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center: <https://www.ipjc.org/>
- Education for Justice: <https://educationforjustice.org>
- Network: <https://networklobby.org/>
- JustFaith Ministries: <https://justfaith.org/>
- The Institute for Peace and Justice: <http://www.ipi-ppi.org/>
- Center for Study of Race and Democracy: <https://www.facebook.com/CSRDatASU/>
- Center for FaithJustice: <http://www.faithjustice.org/>
- The Carter Center: <https://www.cartercenter.org/>
- The Peace Alliance: <http://peacealliance.org/>
- [Equal Justice Initiative \(EJI\)](#): <https://www.facebook.com/equaljusticeinitiative>

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- Anti-Racism Project: <https://www.antiracismproject.org/resources>

To build bridges you must climb down
the bank –
get your feet wet and hands dirty;
it's not enough just to shout
at those on the other side.

- Leonard Sweet

Some Resources Which Would Be Helpful for All Necessary – and Sometimes Challenging – Conversations

- Civil Conversations Project: <http://www.civilconversationsproject.org/>
- Difficult Conversations: <http://aprilfiet.com/my-thoughts/difficult-conversations>



Some Resources to Assist in Critical Thinking

- Critical Thinking Skills: <https://globaldigitalcitizen.org/critical-thinking-skills-cheatsheet-infographic>
- Critical Thinking: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/learn/critical-thinking.html>

GEMS Wonderings

- What has your parish done? What might you do?
- How do we listen to the experiences of the people? To the happenings of the day? How do connect our experiences with Gospel challenges?
- What other topics/real life issues might need attention in adult faith formation in your parish?



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Past issues of **GEMS** are archived at
www.janetschaeffler.com

Additional ideas for Adult Faith Formation Planning and Best Practices can be found in:

- *Deepening Faith: Adult Faith Formation in the Parish*
<https://www.litpress.org/Products/4652/Deepening-Faith>
- *The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation*
http://www.lifelongfaith.com/store/p25/The_Seasons_of_Adult_Faith_Formation.html
- *The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation website*
<http://www.lifelongfaith.com/2015-adult-faith-formation-symposium.html>