

A Parish Journey for Racial Justice | Thursday, July 16, 2020

Additional Resources

A special thank you to our presenters: Christine Dragonette (St. Francis Xavier College Church), Boreta Singleton (St. Francis Xavier Parish), Catherine Wolfe (St. Francis Xavier Parish), Monica Smith (Saint Ignatius Loyola Parish), Pat Berning (Bellarmino Chapel), and Tim Severyn (Bellarmino Chapel).

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BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST PARISH

The Love of Christ Impels Us



SEPTEMBER 25, 2019
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER (COLLEGE) CHURCH
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sfxstl.org

11 Presenter PowerPoints [here](#).

Additional Presenter Resources

Christine Dragonette, Director of Social Ministry Parish: St. Francis Xavier College Church (St. Louis, MO) Contact Information: christine@sfxstl.org , (314) 977-7309	Resources: SFX College Church Powerpoint Anti-Racism Continuum SFX Focus Group Summary Document Update on SFX Antiracism Efforts Night Will Be No More pastoral letter
Boreta Singleton and Catherine Wolfe Parish: St. Francis Xavier Parish in Manhattan	Resources: www.sfxavier.org - St. Francis Xavier Parish in Manhattan-- you can find racial justice pledge there Link to our outline
Tim Severyn, Director of Social Mission & Pat Berning, Dismantling Racism Team Member Parish: Bellarmine Chapel Contact Information: severynte@xavier.edu patberning1963@gmail.com	Resources: Anti-Racism Resource Page Color of COVID/George Floyd Protest Livestream with Black Activists Link to Presentation Slides Communal Discernment Process Community Organizing Resources: Faith in Action Public Narrative with Marshall Ganz

Questions and Answers from Chat Box

Note: Presenters continue to remind us that none of us have all the answers. We are all in this together, figuring it out together in our shared, mutual liberation.

Who conducts an institutional anti racism audit?

Christine: We will likely work with [Crossroads Antiracism](#), but worth looking up antiracism organizing groups in your area (or asking your Jesuit province's Social Ministries staff person)

Can you speak a little more to the accountability piece and how the parish is assessing where they are along the continuum - if they're moving in the right direction?

Christine: Accountability is definitely an ongoing process and starts with building authentic relationships. The work we do must be accountable to people of color who are most directly targeted by racism. We don't have it all figured out, but our primary accountability relationships are with 1) SFX parishioners of color and 2) our geographical deanery, the North City Deanery, made up of many majority Black parishes. Important to remember that we are often coming to the table late in this work, so be sure to think about/research which local People of Color-led organizations are already doing good work in your community.

In terms of assessing where we are on the continuum, our team took a look at the Anti-Racism continuum tool at our Crossroads training; each person went through the chart and determined where they thought we are individually, then we shared in a large group and came to a consensus that we are in column 3: A Compliance Organization. We are now looking at column four (where we would like to be next) and our anti-racism team will start to determine what each of the points listed would look like at our parish if done well. We'll then aim to turn those into concrete goals and determine steps toward achieving them. We are just getting started on doing this, though!

Could you please elaborate a little more on the statement that racial justice is not charity?

Christine: Yes, there is so much to unpack here! First, distinguishing between charity and justice. The USCCB uses the "[Two Feet of Love in Action](#)" model to define social justice as removing root causes and improving structures, while charitable works meet basic needs and aid individuals. Many of our parishes have direct service programs that are often very needed; however, these programs do not actually change the policies and structures that uphold racism.

While it's crucial to center Black and Brown folks as directly targeted by racism, it's also important to realize that racism harms us all. If white people are engaging in this work as an act of charity, we can too easily fall into the "white savior complex." There has been a lot written and said about the white savior complex; I can try to find some good resources for those interested and welcome any other resources that have been helpful for others.

Christine was there pushback by the parish re engaging partners and broadening the conversation and action?

Christine: I honestly would not say we received a lot of pushback (that I am aware of) from parishioners about our parish engaging in anti-racism work in general. Overall, our parish is eager to engage with all of the partners I listed in the presentation and move forward on this work. Now, whether or not we agree on how to do that is another question entirely. One idea for wrestling with pushback is to start with writings from the institutional church that bolster the claim that this is something we as a Church (and we as a parish) should care about. Some suggestions:

[USCCB's Open Wide Our Hearts](#) (2018)

[Bishop Seitz's Night Will Be No More pastoral letter](#) (2019)

[USCCB statement in response to the killing of George Floyd](#) (2020)

Some other resources on our parish website: <https://sfxstl.org/antiracism-resources>

Our Racism & Reconciliation committee also put together [this Lenten Racial Justice Journey content](#) for Lent 2020.

Curious if parishes are taking part in the public protests or working on community initiatives involving police review?

Boreta- Yes, some of our parishioners have participated in public protests.

Parish protests and actions are also reported in Kansas City, Atlanta, and elsewhere.

What does it mean to be an ethnic Catholic?

Catherine- By ethnic Catholic I mean growing up in an insular Irish Catholic neighborhood where everyone presumed an understanding of who everyone else was - an expectation of who everyone should be. The contiguous Italian Catholic neighborhood had a similar insular structure.

Tim. I'd love insight on how you framed communal discernment for the parish.

Tim - There's a lot of models out there, but this is where we started - XU Communal Discernment Resources -

<https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/resources-by-theme/leadership-resources>

How did communications happen parish-wide, what forums or vehicles?

(All presenters)

Tim - For us, it was any and all channels we could identify - bulletin/e-bulletin, social media (FB), parish website, from the pulpit, through special events/focus groups, and most critically, through one-to-one conversations. That is where the community organizing framework comes in handy.

How do we work toward anti-racism when virtually all depictions of Christ show him as white, when he most certainly was not? This seems to be central to me in regard to racism.

(All presenters)

Tim - Agree! We got a print of this mural for our parish (that ISN shared at the Teach-In), but still need much more images of people of color in our church and in our educational materials -

<https://www.americamagazine.org/arts-culture/2019/06/21/catholic-high-schooler-painted-mural-black-saints-help-fight-racism>

How do you start the conversation if your church is predominantly white and it's even difficult to talk to staff about these issues? Any tips or tricks for first steps??

(All presenters)

To bring about equity and equality among all peoples, whites will need to "give up" things. Does that beg the question of "reparations?"

Tim - Yes! Michael Eric Dyson's book, *Tears We Cannot Stop*, has an interesting conversation around this.

What sequence is recommended re JF modules?

- 1) Faith & Racial Equity - focus on white privilege
- 2) Faith & Racial Healing - focuses on history of racism
- 3) Faith & Racial Justice - requires completion of FRE or FRH

General Resources Shared by the Group

ISN Resources for Responding to Racial Justice

<https://ignatiansolidarity.net/resources/faith-in-action-responding-to-racial-injustice/>

Examen for White Allies -

<https://ignatiansolidarity.net/blog/2020/06/03/an-examen-for-white-allies-2/>

Michael Eric Dyson, *Tears We Cannot Stop* book (remember to buy from a local, Black-owned book store): <https://www.amazon.com/Tears-We-Cannot-Stop-America/dp/1250135990>

Bishop Mark Seitz, "Night Will Be No More" -

<https://elpasoheraldpost.com/bishop-mark-seitz-pens-letter-night-will-be-no-more/>

Color of Covid - <https://www.bellarminechapel.org/color-of-covid.html>

Church of Second Chances - (Link coming soon)