

SYSTEMIC RACISM

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

HOPE IN THE FACE OF RACISM SERIES

A COLLABORATION OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN TASK FORCE
AND THE VOICE OF THE POOR COMMITTEE



Opening Prayer

Wake me up Lord, so that the evil of racism finds no home within me. Keep watch over my heart Lord, and remove from me any barriers to your grace, that may oppress and offend my brothers and sisters.

Fill my spirit Lord, so that I may give services of justice and peace. **Clear my mind Lord**, and use it for your glory.

And finally, remind us Lord that you said, "**blessed are the peacemakers**, for they shall be called children of God."
Amen.

From For The Love of One Another (1989), a special message from the Bishops' Committee on Black Catholics of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Pastoral Letter, Brothers and Sisters to Us, the U.S. Catholic bishops' Pastoral Letter on Racism (1979).

Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love

“The poverty experienced by many of these communities has its roots in racist policies that continue to impede the ability of people to find affordable housing, meaningful work, adequate education, and social mobility.” (p.14)

usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/index.cfm

Holy See

The choice of this kind of policy remains controversial. . . risk that such measures will crystallize differences rather than foster social cohesion . . .

it is not enough to recognize equality - it has to be created. . .
it cannot be denied that the weight of historical, social and cultural precedents requires at times positive action by States.
(No. 19)

-Pontifical Council For Justice And Peace

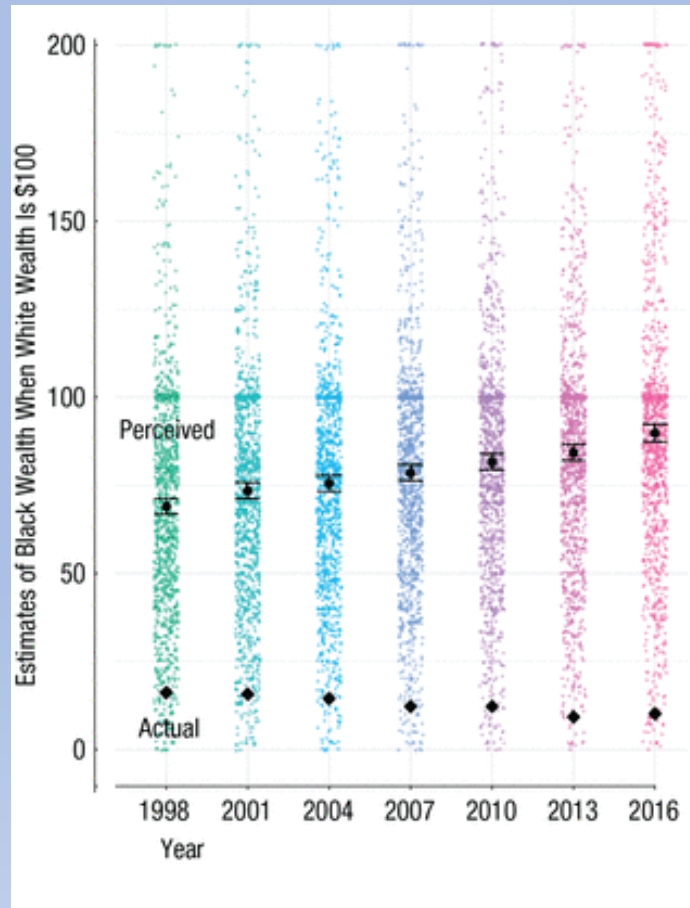
Contribution To World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2001)

Perceptions of Progress and Equity

- ❖ When asked: If an average White household has \$100 in wealth, how much wealth does an average Black family have?
- ❖ Respondents answer, on average, \$90.
- ❖ The reality is less than \$10.
- ❖ Americans misperceive the wealth of Black families approximately by a factor of 10

Kraus, M., Onyeador, I., et al. (2019). "The Misperception of Racial Economic Inequality." *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

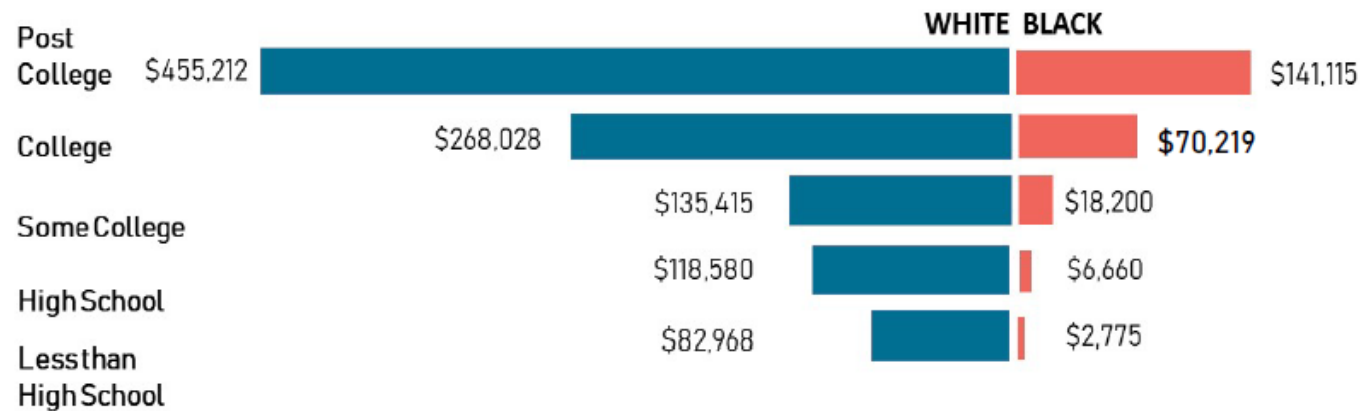
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Perceptions of Progress and Equity

Figure 1: Median Household Net Worth by Race and Education



Source: Authors' calculations, Survey on Income and Program Participation (SIPP) 2014.

Note: Many of these figures were updated from a prior report entitled *Umbrellas Don't Make it Rain: Why Studying Hard and Working Hard Isn't Enough for Black Americans* (Hamilton et al. 2015).

“... on average, a black household with a college-educated head has less wealth than a white family whose head did not even obtain a high school diploma.”

Darity, W., Hamilton, D., et al. (2018) [What We Get Wrong About Closing the Racial Wealth Gap.](#)

Housing and Homelessness

13% - Black portion of the total population

21% - Black portion of people living in poverty

40% - Black portion of people experiencing homelessness

'A Pileup of Inequities': Why People of Color Are Hit Hardest by Homelessness. Pew Stateline (analyzing Census and HUD data), March 29, 2019.

Housing and Homelessness

Evictions

- ❖ Virginia: the majority of Black neighborhoods have an eviction rate quadruple the national rate (controlling for poverty and income)

[“Eviction isn’t just about poverty. It’s also Washington Post about race--and Virginia proves it.”](#) November 10, 2018.
Washington Post, reporting on Virginia Commonwealth University research.

- ❖ Washington: Black households evicted five times more than Whites; Black women evicted seven times more than White women

[“UW research shows women and racial minorities disproportionately face evictions in Washington state.”](#) February 17, 2019. *The University of Washington Daily*, reporting on UW research.

- ❖ Find Information on your community: evictionlab.org/

Housing and Homelessness

Property Taxes

- ❖ Chicago - Tax Assessor places disproportionate property tax burden on poorer, mostly minority neighborhoods.⁺
- ❖ Philadelphia - years of improper assessments means minority neighborhoods “likely paying more than their fair share of property taxes.”⁺
- ❖ Nationwide - Black and Hispanic households have a property tax burden at least 10% higher than comparable White households.^{*}

⁺ *Black Homeowners Pay More Than ‘Fair Share’ in Property Taxes*, June 25, 2010. Pew Stateline.

^{*} *The Assessment Gap: Racial Inequalities in Property Taxation*, June 10, 2010. Washington Center for Equitable Growth.

COVID-19 has certainly affected our neighbors of color, but as stated they have more medical issues than just COVID-19

- Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put some members of racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting COVID-19 or experiencing severe illness, regardless of age.
- Food deserts - corresponding poor eating habits
- Lingering effects of redlining policies
- Other barriers to entry - employment and benefits

What definition of racism is the Society using?

- “to follow Christ through service to those in need and so bear witness to compassionate and liberating love”
- "a calling to serve God in His Poor”
- No work of charity is foreign to the Society
- Root causes of poverty - Hope in Action

Our Native American brothers and sisters are often forgotten in the conversation about race

- USCCB Pastoral Letter on racism - ALL discriminated groups
- Changes to policies will be a positive on all disadvantaged groups
- A Vincentian Guide to Diversity/Multicultural Issues
- Covid-19 - living conditions that Native Americans have been subjected to have left them extremely vulnerable

Systemic Change

Shifting the conditions that hold poverty in place

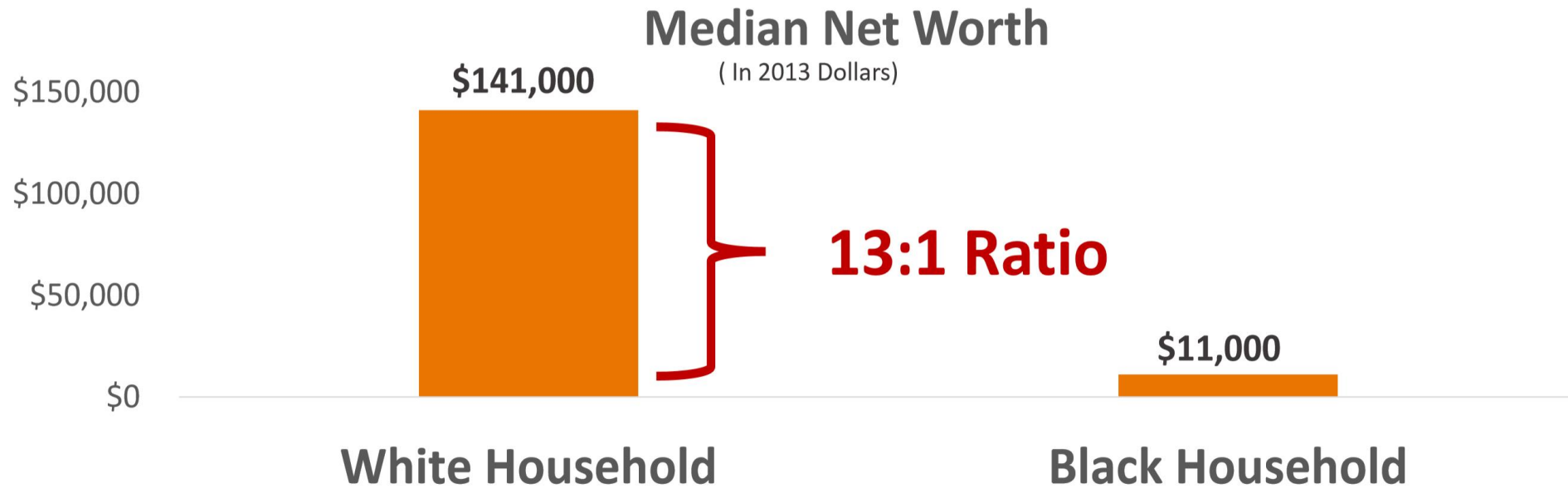
Systemic Racism

12 policies that have excluded black families from economic growth

Communities of color are 2X as likely to

- Experience hunger
- Live below the poverty line
- Be one pay check away from becoming poor
- Blacks, in particular, are twice as likely not to be called back after completing a job application and an interview

The Racial Wealth Gap!



Source: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/12/racial-wealth-gaps-great-recession/>

Crime-Is it just individual behavior?

“America’s criminal justice system is broken. The US Catholic Bishops came to this conclusion after consulting with “Catholics involved in every aspect of the system — chaplains, police officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, probation and parole officers, wardens correctional officers, crime victims, offenders, families of both victims and offenders, and treatment personnel.”

SVDP USA Position on Restorative Justice, approved by the National Board of Directors, Sept. 2, 2006

Mass Incarceration

- 1980-500,000 people incarcerated in US.
- 2015-there were 2.2 million.
- The US is about 5% of the world's population and has 21% of the world's prisoners.
- Blacks & Hispanics are about 32% of the US population. They comprised 56% of all incarcerated people in 2015.
- Blacks & whites use drugs at similar rates, but the imprisonment rate of African Americans for drug charges is almost 6 times that of whites.

<https://www.naACP.org/criminal-justice-fact-sheet/>

Mass Incarceration

- 1 in every 37 adults in the United States, or 2.7% of the adult population, is under some form of correctional supervision.
- If Blacks & Hispanics were incarcerated at the same rates as whites, prison and jail populations would decline by about 50%.
- 1 in 5 returning citizens earns less than \$7,600 the years following release.
- Nearly 1 in 4 households headed by a returning citizen lives in deep poverty.
- Single parent families are often that largest group of families served by SVDP conferences-How many of your neighbors have an incarcerated family member?

Advocacy Considerations

- What can you do to reduce crime in your city or town?
- How can you remove barriers for returning citizens?

Confronting My White Privilege

Continuing the Dialogue

“Let us occupy ourselves with people who have too many needs and not enough rights, who call out rightly for a greater involvement in public affairs, for guarantees of work — and who cry out against misery.”

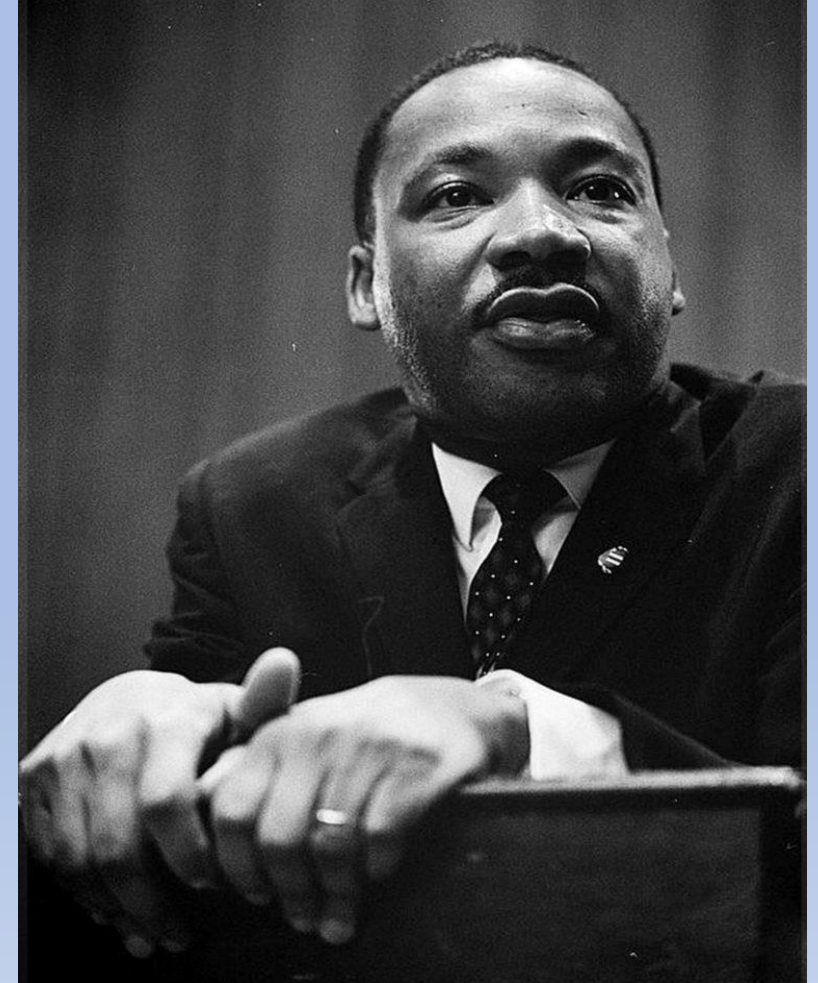
Frédéric Ozanam to his friend Foisset in 1848.

Please continue to journey with us.....

From chaos to community...

Negroes hold only one key to the double lock of peaceful change. The other is in the hands of the white community.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.



Examination of Conscience and Commitment

Individual

- We cannot proclaim a gospel we do not live.
- We cannot carry out a real social ministry without knowing the Lord and hearing his call to justice and peace.
- As Vincentians we must show by our deeds of love and justice that the gospel we proclaim is fulfilled in our actions.

Tools:

Individual

- Examination of Conscience and individual/personal commitment to change the world around me
- Talk to someone whose culture is not like yours, listening to learn rather than to teach your ways.....
- SVdP Position papers - read them

Conference/Council

- Building relationships between conferences with different cultures
- Spiritual Advisors Guiding discussions to unpack our differences
- SVdP Position papers - review them with your conference members
- SVdP MCD booklet - review with your conference members
- Civil Dialogue guidelines - coming soon

SVdP National Board: Strategic Plan.....

Objectives for Goal 3-1 under
FA III: Advocate for and work
towards a more just world

*Educate members about
Catholic Social Teaching and
how it relates to being a
Vincentian*

Objectives for Goal 4-1 under
FA IV: Promote deeper and
meaningful relationships with
those we serve

*Provide resources to
encourage and embrace
meaningful encounters with
those we serve*

Coming soon.....

**Hope in the Face of
Racism...**
**The Hispanic/Latino
Story**

**Hope in the Face of
Racism...**
**The Native American
Story**

Hope in the Face of Racism
Unconscious bias and the home visit

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.