

NATIONAL DAY OF

RACIAL HEALING

Shake Us From Our Slumber

When our eyes do not see the gravity of racial justice,
Shake us from our slumber and open our eyes, O Lord.

When out of fear we are frozen into inaction,
Give us a spirit of bravery, O Lord.

When we try our best but say the wrong things,
Give us a spirit of humility, O Lord.

When the chaos of this dies down,
Give us a lasting spirit of solidarity, O Lord.

When it becomes easier to point fingers outwards,
Help us to examine our own hearts, O Lord.

God of truth, in your wisdom, Enlighten Us.
God of hope in your kindness, Heal Us.
Creator of All People, in your generosity, Guide Us.

Racism breaks your heart,
break our hearts for what breaks yours, O Lord.

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

THE DIOCESE OF
WEST MISSOURI

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP p. 815)

PSALM 130:1-8

We cry to you, O Lord, from the depths of the earth.
Out of the depths I call to you, LORD;
Lord, hear my cry!

May your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

If you, LORD, keep account of sins,
Lord, who can stand?

But with you is forgiveness
and so you are revered.

I wait for the LORD,
my soul waits
and I hope for his word.

My soul looks for the Lord
more than sentinels for daybreak.

More than sentinels for daybreak,
let Israel hope in the LORD,
For with the LORD is mercy,
with him is plenteous redemption,
And he will redeem Israel
from all its sins.

AN EXAMEN FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Have I fully loved God and fully loved my neighbor as myself?

Have I caused pain to others by my actions or my words that offended my brother or my sister?

Have I done enough to inform myself about the sin of racism, its roots, and its historical and contemporary manifestations? Have I opened my heart to see how unequal access to economic opportunity, jobs, housing, and education on the basis of skin color, race, or ethnicity, has denied and continues to deny the equal dignity of others?

Is there a root of racism within me that blurs my vision of who my neighbor is?

Have I ever witnessed an occasion when someone “fell victim” to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism and I did or said nothing, leaving the victim to address their pain alone?

Have I ever witnessed an occasion when someone “fell victim” to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism with me inflicting the pain, acting opposite of love of God and love of neighbor?

Have I ever lifted up and aided a person who “fell victim” to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism and paid a price for extending mercy to the other? How did I react? Did my faith grow? Am I willing to grow even more in faith through my actions?

JERICHO ROAD

–LUKE 10:25-37 NRSV –

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?”

He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”



A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. We are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's road side, but that will be only an initial act.

One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. Compassion sees that an edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring. A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth.

Let us pray:

Ever present God, you called us to be in relationship with one another and promised to dwell wherever two or three are gathered. In our community, we are many different people; we come from many different places, have many different cultures. Open our hearts that we may be bold in finding the riches of inclusion and the treasures of diversity among us. We pray in faith. Amen.

–REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. –

LITANY OF REPENTANCE

Dear people of God, our history is marred by oppression, by the enslavement of those who differ from us, and by the forces of racism that attack human dignity. The sin of racism is woven into our lives and our cultures, in small and great ways, in things done and things left undone.

As followers of Christ, we reject racism and the oppression of other human beings. In building Christ's beloved community, we must strive to love all people, respect all people, and work for the good of all people. We must stand alongside God's children of every race, language, and culture, and work together as agents of justice, peace, and reconciliation.

In the assurance of our forgiveness, let us kneel before God and humbly confess our sins: our participation in racism, our privilege based on racism, and our perpetuation of racism.

God the Father, you freed your people from slavery in Egypt, yet the legacy of slavery deforms our lives today.

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, you prayed that all would be united in your love and service, yet the divisions among us rend your body.

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, you inspire us to live peaceably with all, yet the stain of genocide and internment mars our striving for justice.

Have mercy on us.

We have harmed one another and the earth through negligence, greed, and self-interest.

Have mercy on us.

We have failed to condemn discrimination that leads to unrest.

Have mercy on us.

We have decried violence, while overlooking inequity and frustration from which it rises.

Have mercy on us.

We have practiced injustice for economic gain and have oppressed others to make a false peace.

Have mercy on us.

We have sought comfort in advantage for ourselves at the cost of injustice for others.

Have mercy on us.

We have welcomed solace over conflict and ignored the cries of those harmed by our comfort.

Have mercy on us.

We have grasped for this world's goods, and been arrogant toward those who have little.

Have mercy on us.

We have not shared the good things we have been given, and blamed the poor for their poverty.

Have mercy on us.

We have been fearful and distrustful of those who are different from us.

Have mercy on us.

We have divided ourselves from others, and refused to listen to or believe their experience.

Have mercy on us.

We have been indifferent to the pain and suffering of our sisters and brothers.

Have mercy on us.

We have held in contempt those who need our help, and not loved them with our whole hearts.

Have mercy on us.

We have been self-satisfied in our privilege, and denied our oppression of others.

Have mercy on us.

We have preferred order over justice, and isolation over the struggle for peace.

Have mercy on us.

We have quietly held good intentions, and kept silent the message of reconciliation.

Have mercy on us.

We have failed to act with courage for the sake of love.

Have mercy on us.

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

May Almighty God have mercy on us, grant us courage and conviction, and strengthen us to love others who are unlike us. May God, the Holy and Undivided Trinity, make us compassionate in our actions and courageous in our works, that we may see Christ's Beloved Community in our own day. Amen.

God of justice, in your wisdom you create all people in your image, without exception. Through your goodness, open our eyes to see the dignity, beauty, and worth of every human being. Open our minds to understand that all your children are brothers and sisters in the same human family.

Open our hearts to repent of racist attitudes, behaviors, and speech which demean others.

Open our ears to hear the cries of those wounded by racial discrimination, and their passionate appeals for change.

Strengthen our resolve to make amends for past injustices and to right the wrongs of history. And fill us with courage that we might seek to heal wounds, build bridges, forgive and be forgiven, and establish peace and equality for all in our communities. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



This guide adapted from these resources:

- <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/prayers-for-racial-justice-and-reconciliation>
- [To Go Forth](#) – a blog from the USCCB, Department of Justice, Peace & Human Development – inspired by Pope Francis.
- Prayers for Racial Reconciliation and Justice, <https://standingcommissiononliturgyandmusic.org/2018/01/03/prayers-for-racial-reconciliation-and-justice/>
- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., from the speech “Beyond Vietnam,” April 1967
- <https://seton-parish.org/prayer-for-racial-healing>