

# Development

- Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love - A Pastoral Letter Against Racism was developed by the Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).
- It was approved by the full body of bishops as a formal statement of the same at its November 2018 General Meeting



# Societal Hostility

**Catalyst: rising societal racial and ethnic hostility largely indicated by overtly racist events such as the re-appearance of nooses and swastikas in public spaces.**

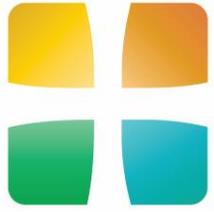
**Extreme nationalist ideologies; xenophobic rhetoric, instigating fears against foreigners, immigrants, and refugees.**

**The bishops specifically reject organizations formed out of racist ideology, calling participation in them or fostering them sinful.**

# Standard of Justice?

- The civil rights movement yielded many positive gains, the Bishops express how *racism continually impacts our culture*.
- They conclude that our progress against racism in recent decades does not fully meet the standard of justice





# Reason to Hope

- **We are reminded that Christ supplies the strength and grace necessary for genuine personal conversion which we need now to reform our churches, civil and social institutions, and society.**
- **The invitation to conversion is for all of us. We are encouraged to acknowledge our failures and restore right relations with others, humbly asking for the grace to overcome racism.**



# Historical and Contemporary Experiences

- Native Americans
- African Americans
- Hispanic Americans

# Genuine Conversion



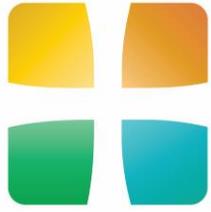
“What is needed, and what we are calling for, is a genuine conversion of heart, a conversion that will compel change, and the reform of our institutions and society.

Conversion is a long road to travel for the individual.

Moving our nation to a full realization of the promise of liberty, equality, and justice for all is even more challenging.

However, in Christ we can find the strength and the grace necessary to make that journey.”

*-Open Wide Our Hearts*



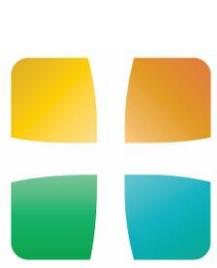
# Past Failure

- **Bishops lament**
  - Pope Nicholas V's officially permitting kings to buy and sell Africans in 1452, which laid the groundwork for the African slave trade.
  - subsequent failure of Catholic leaders to formally oppose slavery, some even owning enslaved people.
- **Bishops acknowledge** sons and daughters of the Church have committed acts of racism and have failed to live as Christ taught standing silently or doing little in the face of grave injustice.
- **Bishops ask** “forgiveness from all who have been harmed by these sins, in the past or in the present.”



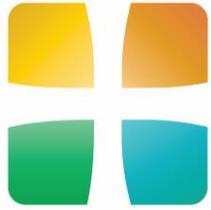
# Courageous Confrontation

***Love compels*** courageous confrontation of racism, a moral problem requiring a moral remedy: human hearts transformed by the Lord who heals the wounds within and between us.



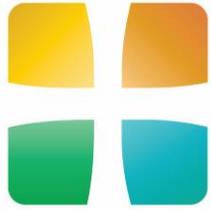
# USCCB Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism

- **To promote justice, the bishops formed the Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism, tasked with the implementation of the pastoral letter.**
- **The Committee must facilitate ongoing national dialogues and foster reconciliation, explore policy solutions, models of reconciliation**
  - **holding listening sessions**
  - **providing resources for**
    - **Parishes**
    - **Schools k-12, College Campuses**
    - **Catechetical**



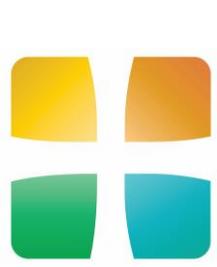
# Call to Action

- **Dioceses**
  - **aid communities of color with struggling schools and parishes**
    - Catechetical training resources
    - youth ministry programs
    - support for families
    - seniors
    - former inmates
  - **Examine hiring and contracting practices**
    - Examine budgets
    - Examine who is is “at the table”



# Call to Action

- **The bishops call each other to self-education through:**
  - cultural and learning institution visits
  - presenting and preaching the entire Christian doctrine on racism.
- **Learning Institutions:**
  - Catholic schools
  - Seminaries
  - publishers



# Call to Action: Conscience Formation

**“Strengthening spiritual convictions regarding respect for other races and ethnic groups.”**

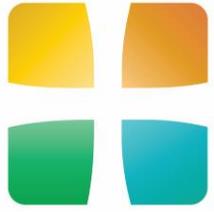
*We must, therefore, form the consciences of our people, especially the young, by clearly presenting the entire Christian doctrine on this subject.*

[We] particularly [ask] ***pastors, preachers, teachers and catechists*** to explain the true teaching of Scripture and Tradition about the origin of all people in God, their final common destiny in the Kingdom of God, the value of the precept of fraternal love, and the total incompatibility between racist exclusivism and the universal calling of all to the same salvation in Jesus Christ.



# Call to Action: Vocations

**The bishops recommit to promoting all vocations in communities of color.**



# Racism: A LIFE ISSUE.

**Ending in prayer for our  
Blessed Mother's intercession,  
racism is named a life issue  
because it attacks a human life.**