
Session One

Read the following sections on pages 5-7 of the Response Document:

- A. To realize our essential interdependence
- B. To address the causes of injustice, not just symptoms
- C. To recognize that the struggle is not only economic and political, but personal

Biblical Reference

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28 (NRSV)

"So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27 (NRSV)

A. To realize our essential interdependence.

1. How have you experienced interdependence today and what did you learn from the experience?
2. What are the signs of persistent racism today?
3. What work remains to eradicate race prejudice and institutional racism in the U.S.? What specific issues present opportunities to make progress on this work?
4. Why is it important to the future of our nation that citizens have more than a distant and superficial knowledge of the civil rights struggle? Are there good processes available to educate youth and adults on this?

B. To address the causes of injustice, not just the symptoms.

1. In accordance with Catholic social teaching, "*Economic decisions and institutions should be assessed according to whether they protect or undermine the dignity of the human person...Barriers to equal pay and employment for women and those facing unjust discrimination must be overcome.*" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* (2011) #76)

How might we change our personal attitudes and our institutions to protect human dignity?

2. What does it mean to be a patriot or patriotic in the 21st century when secessionists of the 19th century are honored as heroes and the confederate flag flies freely in some public areas today?
3. How does our racial history (a) influence the current perception of terrorists and (b) shape U.S. national defense policy?
4. Is racism a cause or a symptom of the widening economic disparity in the U.S. and why?

C. To recognize that the struggle is not only economic and political, but personal.

1. Do you agree or disagree that the wounds of racism and segregation in the U.S. extend to all Americans? How so?
2. What is your personal recollection or understanding of the civil rights era and how has it impacted your life?
3. What responsibility do people of faith have to actively work to correct the sin of racism? Specifically, what is being done in our churches to continue promoting personal and social transformation?