

Overview

Understanding Racism in the United States is a 10-day curriculum designed to be an independent learning tool that is enriched by classroom interactions and teacher-guided discussions and activities.

The goal is to guide students through the sensitive topic of racism. Students will learn the difference between racism and prejudice. The issue of racism will not be “solved” at the end of this course. That is a lifelong journey. However, students will be better equipped to engage in constructive conversations about race. Our goal is that everyone is empowered to reverse the sin of racism and help achieve racial justice.

Inspiration

The inspiration for *Understanding Racism* came from the work of Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum.

<https://www.beverlydanieltatum.com/about/>

The course authors, Judy Bartel and Melissa Johnson, combined their backgrounds in social studies, theology, and education for this comprehensive and unique approach to racism education.

Dr. Tatum reviewed the content outlines to ensure the information was accurate, credible, and respectful.

Learning Goals

- To learn what “race” is and isn’t, and to learn that racism is perpetuated by prejudices that are learned and can be unlearned.
- To be able to recognize how prejudice and unconscious bias generate racism.
- To develop empathy for populations targeted by racism.
- To empower students to live out the Gospel in today’s world. Students are engaged by interactive learning involving exploration and decision-making. When students encounter real-life scenarios throughout this course, they are “rehearsing for life”. They practice responding to difficult situations in the course, so they are more prepared to value human diversity, defend universal human dignity, and act in solidarity in everyday life.

eLearning

Understanding Racism is built on Saint Mary’s Press’s unique eLearning platform. Engaging interactions invite students to discover the powerful truths of the course themselves. Polls, scenarios, social shares, image uploads, and a profile activity turn students into content-creators. Powerful narratives and accurate data ground students in a broad knowledge base that is centered in Catholic social teaching.

Endorsement

"After going through the modules in this program, I only wished that we could have had access to this material during our times of healing and rebuilding our parishes following Hurricane Katrina. This program is a wonderful tool to assist in the conversation of racism, especially with youth. I highly recommend this to anyone who wants to tackle this 'original sin' that still affects our society. "

-Ansel Augustine, D. Min, Archdiocese of New Orleans

Student feedback from Mater Dei Catholic High School, Diocese of Orange

"My understanding of racism has definitely grown, I always knew that racism was a bad thing but I never knew how much exactly it affected someone, as well as I thought racism barely happened anymore, but now I know that racism happens every single day."

"I learned that race is a social construct that people have been using to exert power over others they perceive as 'different.' We need to create a world where all are treated as equals."

"The main message of the course is to show others what racism is. It showed examples of things people of color have to go through and what we can do to stop it, or at least stand up to it."

"The main message of the course was to notice how society has shaped our views through subtle ideas that are being planted in our brains. We learned how to deal with this and how to notice it instead of letting it affect us. Treat everyone equal."