



# BREAKING OPEN THE SIN OF RACISM

A COMPANION DISCUSSION GUIDE



University of  
Dayton



# SERIES SUMMARY

*Breaking Open the Sin of Racism is an 8-part video series by scholars at the University of Dayton, a Catholic Marianist university, and Chaminade-Julienne Catholic High School in Dayton, Ohio. The video series and discussion guide are prepared for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for use by faith-organizations. The series begins with a macro global and historical examination of race and racism, and progresses to a micro examination of the interpersonal impact of race and racism.*

## OBJECTIVES:

- (1) To increase awareness of the invisibility of privilege, systemic racism, anti-racism, and the predominance of whiteness in our nation, and particularly within the context of the Catholic Church
- (2) To foster dialogues among parish members

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

This discussion guide was created to accompany these informative videos available here designed for facilitated small group conversations but can be used in many different ways, including for personal reflection. The discussion questions for each video were created by the video's presenter, an expert in their field. The Catholic Social Action Office of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati with the Anti-racism Task Force puts on workshops, both virtual and in-person, using these videos and discussion guides. If you are interested in learning more about these workshops or scheduling one check out our webpage here:

<https://resources.catholicaoc.org/offices/catholic-social-action/racism-privilege>

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# BEST PRACTICES FOR FACILITATING DIALOGUE

*Many individuals do not have a lot of practice in engaging in conversations on race and racism, particularly in mixed-race settings. Therefore, it is important to build trust before beginning dialogue. A common strategy for facilitating dialogue is to begin with conversation norms. We share some conversation norms here as a starting point, but it's important to have the conversation norms reflect the group dynamics. Consider inviting group members to modify these norms, add, or delete any as the group sees fit.*

***Stay engaged:*** Often, you only get out of dialogue sessions what you bring to the dialogue session.

***Share airtime:*** If you hear your voice more than others, consider stepping back. If you haven't shared with the group, consider stepping out of your comfort zone and stepping forward. Silence can be beneficial to allow time to process.

***Have grace--be patient with yourself and others:*** Racial justice is a journey and not a destination; recognize that people may be at different points of their journey.

***Speak your truth:*** Share from your perspective, and resist the temptation to speak on behalf of others (particularly those not in the room).

***Notice your judgments or defensiveness:*** Be mindful of your body language, and conversations that may be triggering to you.

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# BEST PRACTICES CONT.

*We are all teachers and learners:* We all have something to contribute to the conversation, and we all have something to gain.

*Respect confidentiality:* Share the concepts that you learn about in dialogue, but maintain confidentiality for those in the group.

*Acknowledge “ouch” moments:* Name when something hurtful is said or done, focusing on the action and not the person. Acknowledge that intent and impact are two different things (for example, I may not have intended to step on your foot, but it doesn’t mean that it still didn’t hurt).

*Listen to understand, not just to respond:* Consider listening as a verb that is focused and intentional with the goal of seeking to comprehend the meaning of the speaker.

*Expect and accept non-closure:* As the topic is complex with many nuances, the dialogue sessions will likely elicit many more questions than answers.

*Be mindful of partisan politics and being needlessly divisive:* Racism relates to politics, but be mindful to how making partisan political statements can get in the way of productive dialogue.

*Expect and allow silence:* We are all on our own journey. It is okay to allow others to gather their thoughts before speaking.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i><b>TITLE</b></i>	<i><b>PAGE</b></i>
Speaker Bios	2 - 4
Introduction	5 - 6
What Can We Learn from the Genesis of the Idea of Race?	7 - 8
Seeing the Past Clearly	9 - 13
Systemic Racism in Dayton	14 - 25
What is implicit bias?	26
Reflections on the Experience of a Black Catholic	27
Inches and Seconds: Thinking About White Privilege	28
Conclusion: A Bigger Faith	29 - 31
Resources & Glossary	32 - 33

# SPEAKER BIOS



## **Dr. Dorothy Mensah-Aggrey**

Dorothy Mensah-Aggrey was born and raised in Ghana, West Africa, and has over 35 years of varied administrative and teaching experiences in Music, Theology and Education. She has a B. Mus., MA in Theology and Ph.D. in Education, and is a Certified Online Programmer. She also has a Master's certificate in Emerging Leader and a certificate in The Leadership Challenge from International Leadership Associates. She currently works at the University of Dayton's Institute for Pastoral Initiatives (IPI). Her extensive travels to other parts of Africa, Central America, Europe, Middle East, and within the United States account for her acute and sensitive perspectives on intercultural affairs. She is a published author and national and international presenter.



## **Dr. Julio Quintero**

Julio Quintero joined the University of Dayton as the Associate Director for Inclusive Excellence Education and Initiatives in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in 2019. Quintero's areas of interest include the intersections between belonging and cultural manifestations, representation and the imagination, utopian and travel literature, and migration. He is the author of two books and more than a dozen articles and reviews published in peer-reviewed journals.



## **Dr. Bill Trollinger**

William Trollinger is Professor of History in the History and Religious Studies Departments at the University of Dayton. He received his B.A. in English and History from Bethel College (MN), and his M.A. and Ph.D. in History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He writes on various topics connected with American evangelicalism, the KKK, and the religious "nones," and his most recent book is *Righting America at the Creation Museum*, co-authored with Susan Trollinger (Professor of English at UD).

# SPEAKER BIOS



## **Dr. Leslie Picca**

Leslie H. Picca is Professor of Sociology and the Roesch Endowed Chair of the Social Sciences at the University of Dayton. Her co-authored publications in racial relations include the books *Jim Crow's Legacy: The Lasting Impact of Segregation and Two-Faced Racism: Whites in the Backstage and Frontstage*. Her research on racial relations has been nationally recognized, and she frequently delivers presentations and workshop training to academic, corporate, and non-profit organizations.



## **Tiffany Taylor Smith**

Tiffany Taylor Smith, M.S. Ed., is the Assistant Vice President for Diversity & inclusion at the University of Dayton. She has spent over 30 years working with education, business and community organizations to increase intercultural competence for both adults and students. Taylor Smith held various roles in human resource development, diversity and sales management with Procter & Gamble Distributing Company. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York, and a master's in education, specializing in counseling services, from Fordham University in New York. She is currently a doctoral student at the University of Dayton in the Educational Leadership program.



## **Sr. Nicole Trahan, FMI**

Sr. Nicole Trahan, FMI, a native of Orange, Texas, is a member of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate (Marianists) and currently lives in Dayton, Ohio. Sr. Nicole serves her congregation as a member of the provincial leadership team, vocations director and director of the pre-novitiate program. She is also a part-time campus minister at Chaminade Julianne Catholic High School. With masters degrees in Catholic School Leadership and Pastoral Ministry, Sr. Nicole has a background in teaching theology/religion on the secondary level, campus ministry on the collegiate and secondary levels, retreat design and leadership, and spiritual accompaniment. She has a passion for faith formation and leadership development, especially of young people. This passion is equally matched by her dedication to seeking justice. She is also a regular contributor to National Catholic Reporter's Global Sisters Report and enjoys writing on various topics.

# SPEAKER BIOS



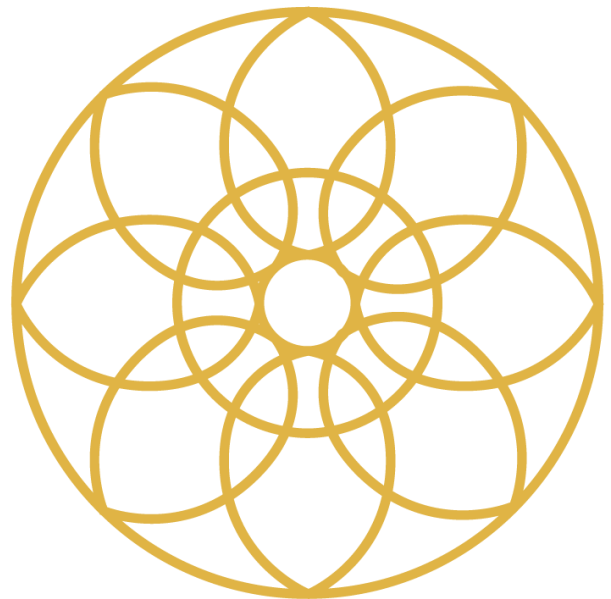
## Dr. Vince Miller

Vincent Miller is the Gudorf Chair in Catholic Theology and Culture at the University of Dayton. He is the author of *Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture* and editor of *The Theological and Ecological Vision of Laudato Si': Everything is Connected*. He is a frequent contributor to *America Magazine* and *Commonweal*.



## Dr. Kelly Johnson

Kelly Johnson is the Fr. William J. Ferree Chair of Social Justice and associate professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Dayton. She holds a BA in Theology and MA in Liturgical Studies from the University of Notre Dame and a Ph.D. in Theological Ethics from Duke University. She teaches courses on Christian practice and virtue, especially related to peacebuilding, economic ethics, human rights, and racial justice. She's the author of *The Fear of Beggars: Stewardship and Poverty in Christian Ethics*.



# INTRODUCTION

*By Dr. Dorothy Mensah-Aggrey*

16 MINUTES, 32 SECONDS

In Dr. Mensah-Aggrey's introduction what is one idea that stood out to you? Why?

How might we reach out and engage with those who are different than us?

What specific action or idea might you include in your household to bridge the racial divide/gap?

**THE POSSIBILITIES OF  
HEALING OUR PAST  
THROUGH RECONCILIATION  
AND RE-MEMBERING THE  
BODY OF CHRIST.**

## My heart Sees You!

*Mama, wait for me*

*Mama, please do not leave me*

*Mama, the cold*

*Mama, the sea*

*Mama, Mama, Mama...*

*My child, my heart, my very breath*

*My child, your umbilical cord is in our  
land*

*The ancestors will guide you*

*Your heart beat is my heart beat*

*My heart beat is within you*

*The sun cups my heart beat by your  
side*

*The moon cradles our heart beats  
next to our cheeks*

*No ocean, just sky*

*See, I am with you*

*Heart beat to heart beat*

*My heart sees you. © Dorothy Mensah-Aggrey*



# WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE GENESIS OF THE IDEA OF RACE?

*By Dr. Julio Quintero*

10 MINUTES, 48 SECONDS

Race predisposes us to see others' differences. How can we retrain our own perceptions to see difference as something positive?

Race serves as a justification to impose political power. What does this statement mean?

Race has been used to separate neighbors, schools, and other communities to this day. What is the significance of this statement?

THE IDEA OF RACE HAS A PARTICULAR GENESIS. THIS PRESENTATION REVISES A FEW OF ITS MORE IMPORTANT STAGES AND OFFERS SOME CONSIDERATIONS TO CURB ITS INFLUENCE IN OUR LIVES.



15th Century Portuguese Voyages of Exploration.  
 By Matt White. <https://www.thinglink.com>

# SEEING THE PAST CLEARLY

*By Dr. Bill Troller*

13 MINUTES, 36 SECONDS

We need to understand the past. Is it vital for us to agree on what the past means? How can we reconcile these different interpretations and move forward together?

Germany has sought to address the Holocaust with numerous memorials of various sorts (not to mention extensive attention to the topic in its educational system). Should the United States do the same regarding slavery? Why or why not?

How might we do this?

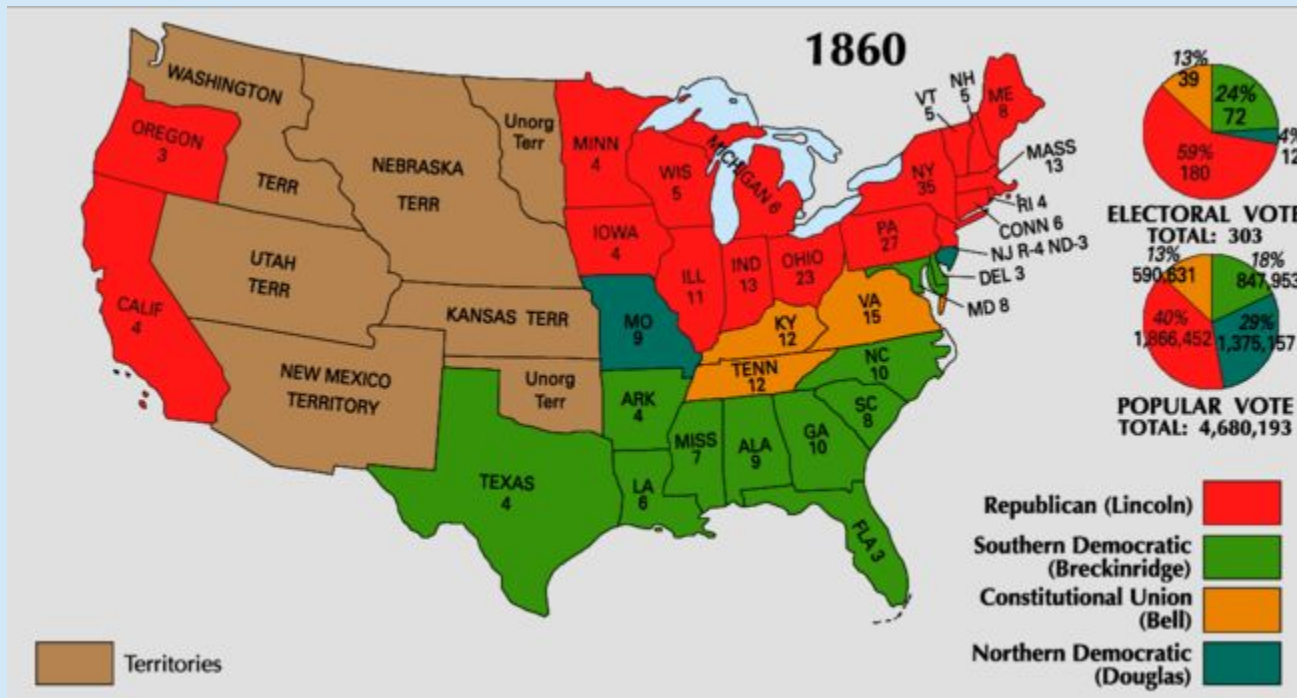
**RACISM AND WHITE  
PRIVILEGE HAVE BEEN  
CENTRAL FEATURES OF  
AMERICAN HISTORY,  
THANKS TO SLAVERY AND  
JIM CROW SEGREGATION.**



## Establishment of Modern Slavery

Between 1500 and 1850: 11-12 million Africans transported to the Americas, the largest forced migration in history.

# 1860 Presidential Election



# Maintaining White Supremacy

- Our goal is “to discriminate to the very extremity of permissible action under the limitations of the Federal Constitution, with a view to the elimination of every Negro voter who can be gotten rid of legally, without materially impairing the numerical strength of the white electorate.”

- Carter Glass (VA)

## Black Voters

LA (1896): 130344

LA (1900): 5320

AL (1896): 181471

AL (1900): 3000



# SYSTEMIC RACISM IN DAYTON

*By Dr. Leslie Picca*

17 MINUTES, 22 SECONDS

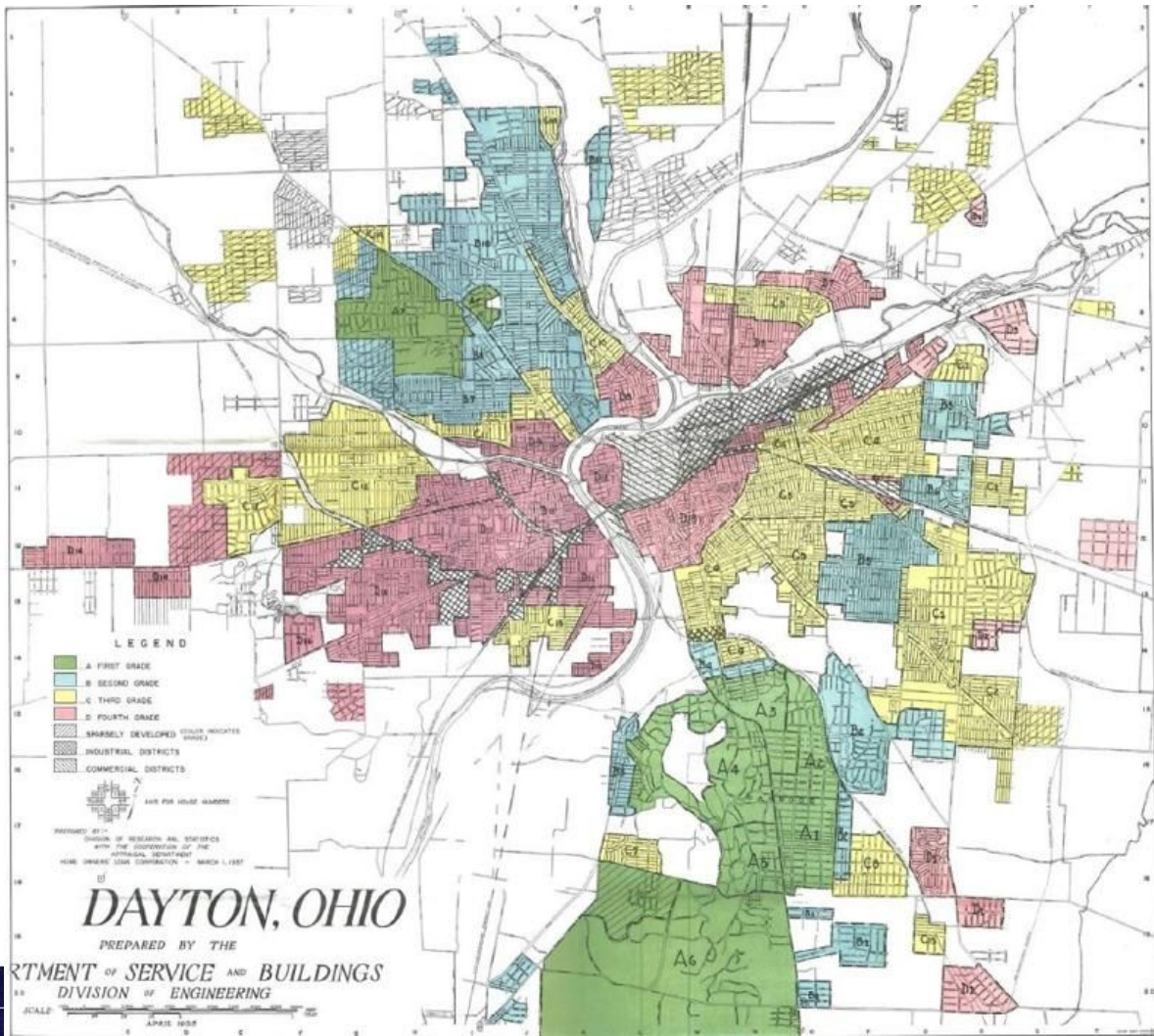
How does the material shared in this presentation relate to what you were taught growing up?

This presentation focuses on large social patterns which aren't always visible in our day-to-day interactions. Do you see examples in your life that relate to the data shared here or examples that refute it?

The end of the presentation focuses on reframing (such as away from colorblindness and a deficit model), as the presenter noted that colorblindness is often code for white. What are your reactions to this? Do you think this is true?

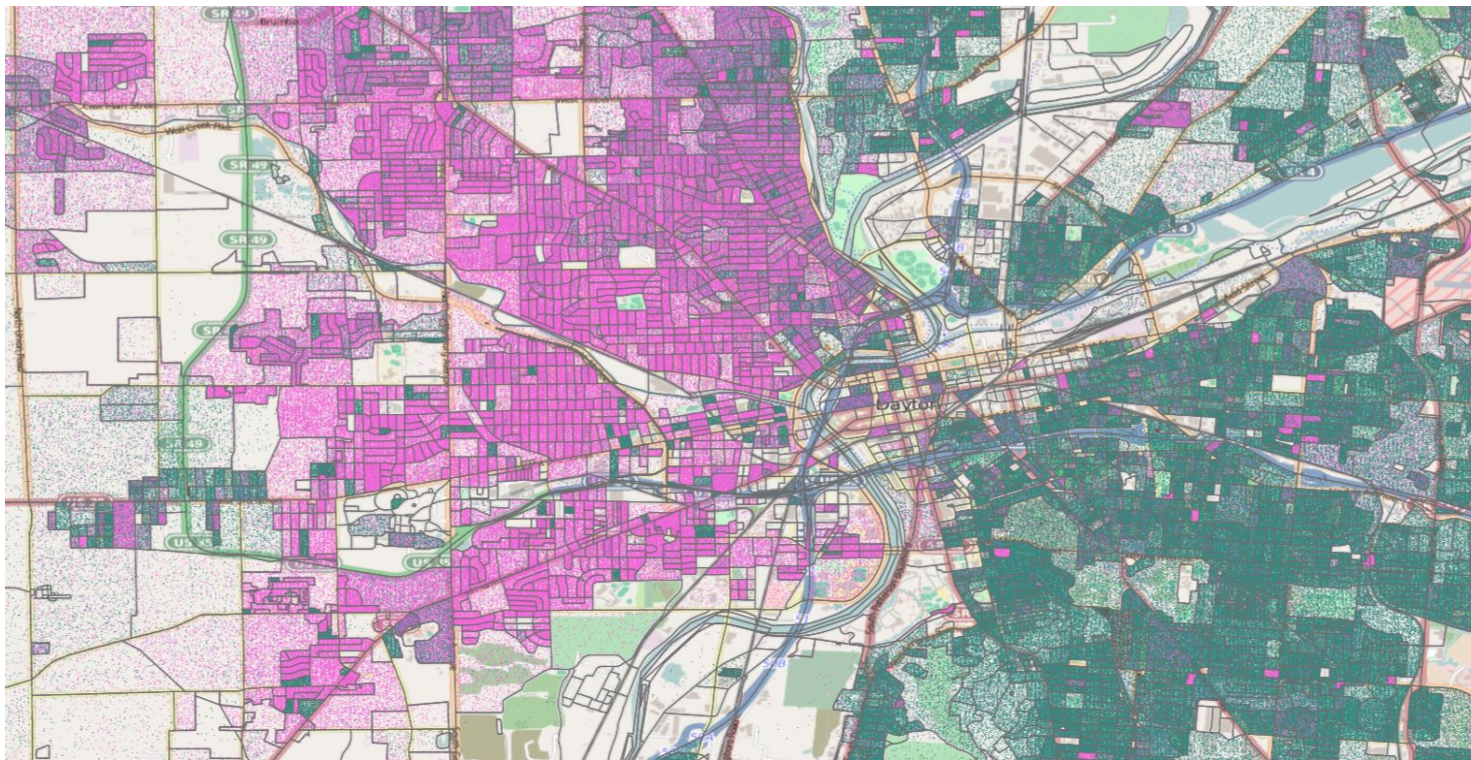
Can you think of examples in your life where colorblindness was an excuse for white to be true or where this may be false?

THE LEGACY OF SLAVERY AND  
JIM CROW LEGAL SEGREGATION  
ARE PROMINENT IN  
INTERGENERATIONAL WEALTH  
AND WEALTH CREATING  
RESOURCES THAT IMPACT EVERY  
PART OF OUR SOCIETY.  
WE NEED TO SHIFT  
CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE  
AWAY FROM SIN AND HATE AND  
EXAMINE POWER AND POLICIES.



Dayton  
Redlining  
Map 1935

# Racial Dot Map, Dayton (2010)





# Connecting the Dots...

This also impacts your relationship with policing & exposure to crime, and your risk of environmental toxins.

Where you live

How much money you make

Family Religion Laws

Your education

Entertainment, Media, Sports

For most of us, this impacts your access to health care

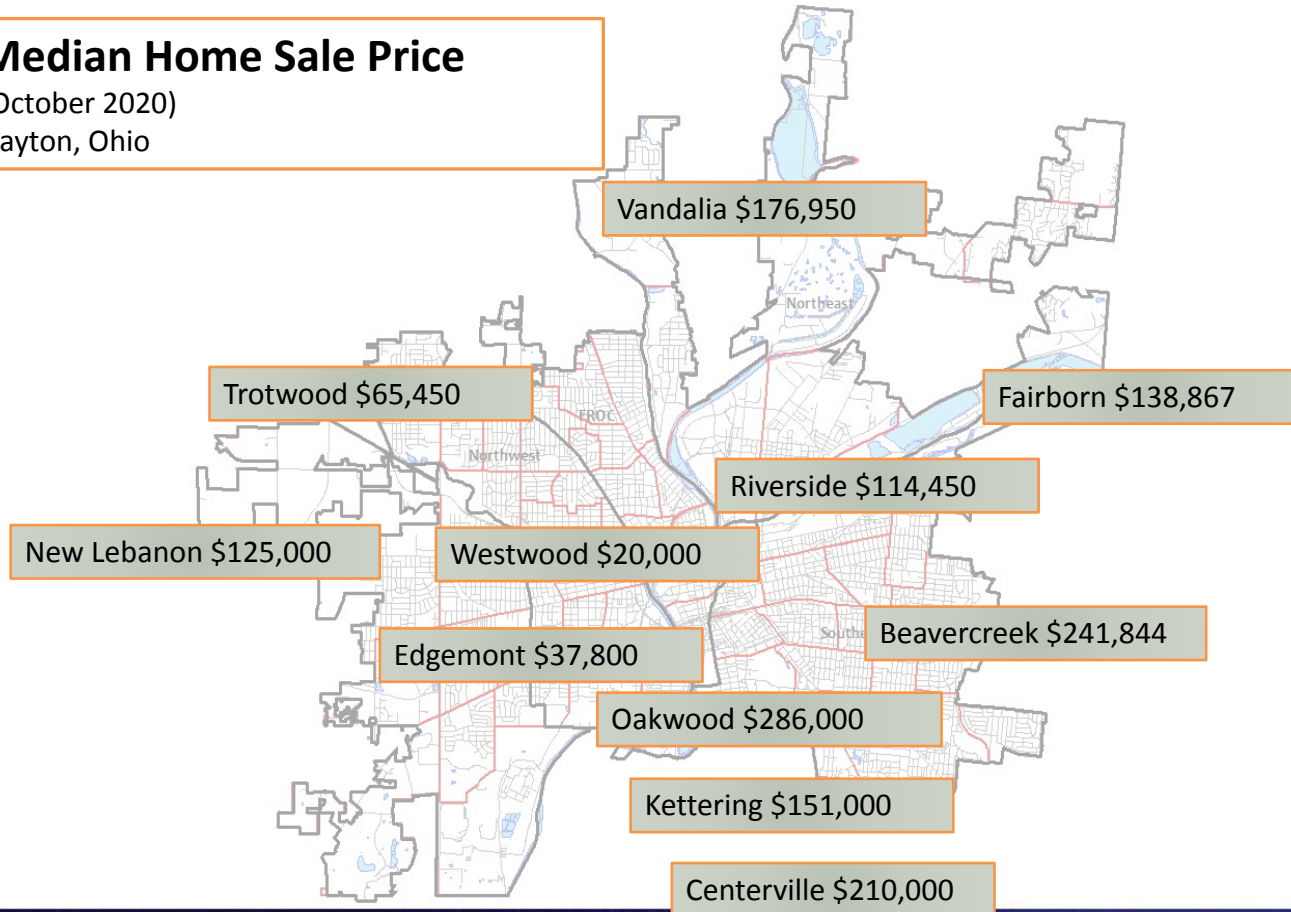
Where you work

Higher Education ?



## Median Home Sale Price

(October 2020)  
Dayton, Ohio



# US Family Income & Wealth

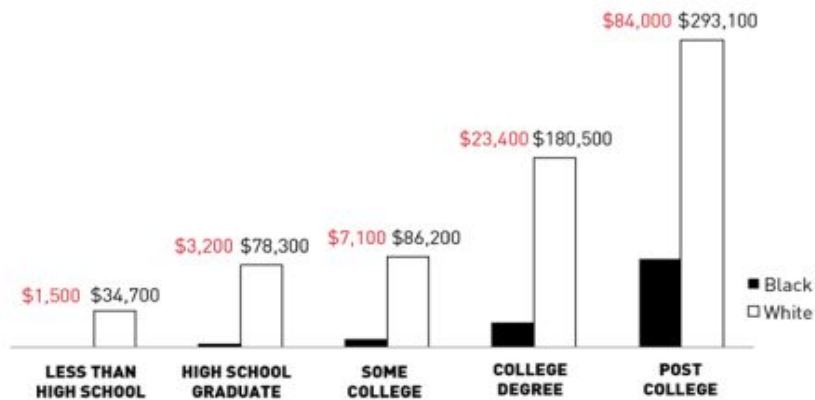
	Median income (\$)	Median net worth (\$)
White	61,200	171,000
Black	35,400	17,600
Latino	38,500	20,700

The gap is worsening. [Between 1983 and 2013](#), white households saw their wealth increased *by* 14%. But during the same period, black household wealth declined 75%. Median Hispanic household wealth declined 50%.



## For People of Color, All the Right Choices Don't Equal All the Right Outcomes

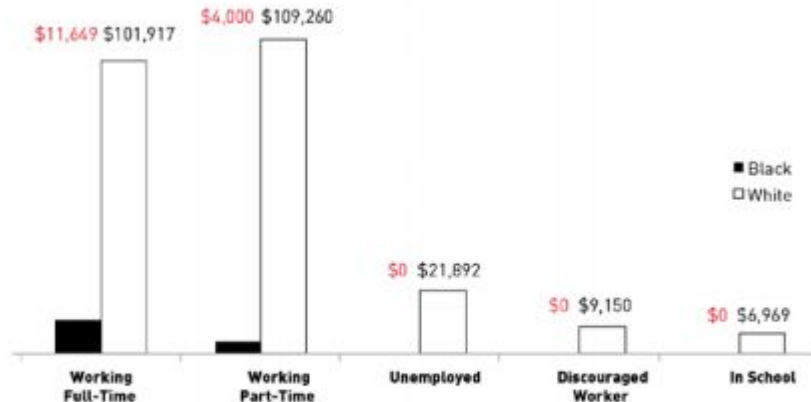
FIGURE 2



### Education is not the Great Equalizer

Median wealth by educational level and race, SIPP 2011

FIGURE 3



### Employment is Not the Great Equalizer

Median wealth by employment/labor force status and race, SIPP 2011

[Umbrellas Don't Make it Rain: Why Studying and Working Hard Isn't Enough for Black Americans \(insightccd.org\)](http://insightccd.org)

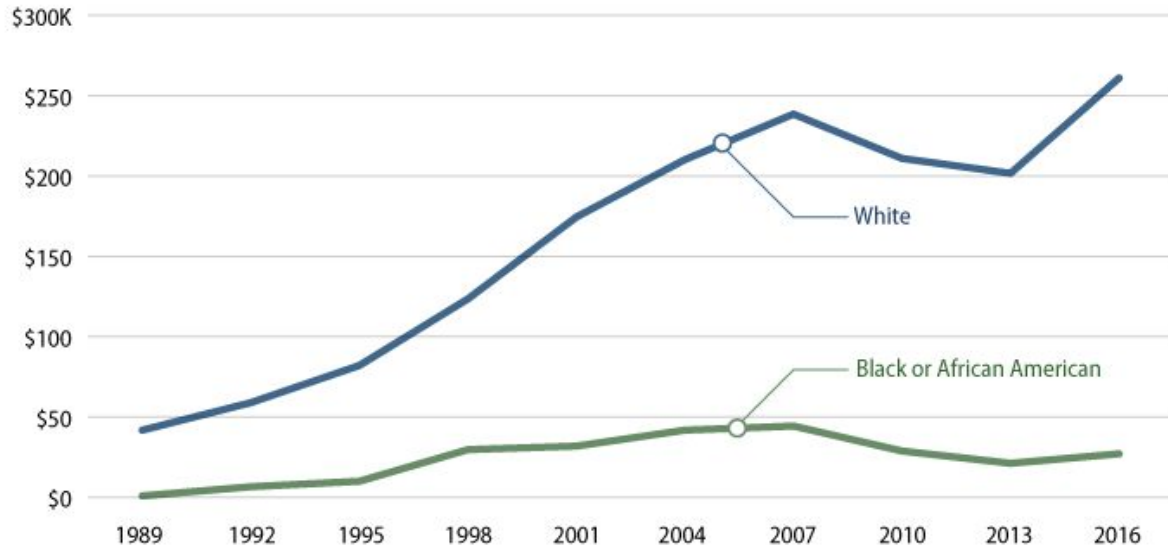


FIGURE 3

## Black or African American households have increasingly faced systematic obstacles to building wealth

Median wealth for households as they aged, by race and year

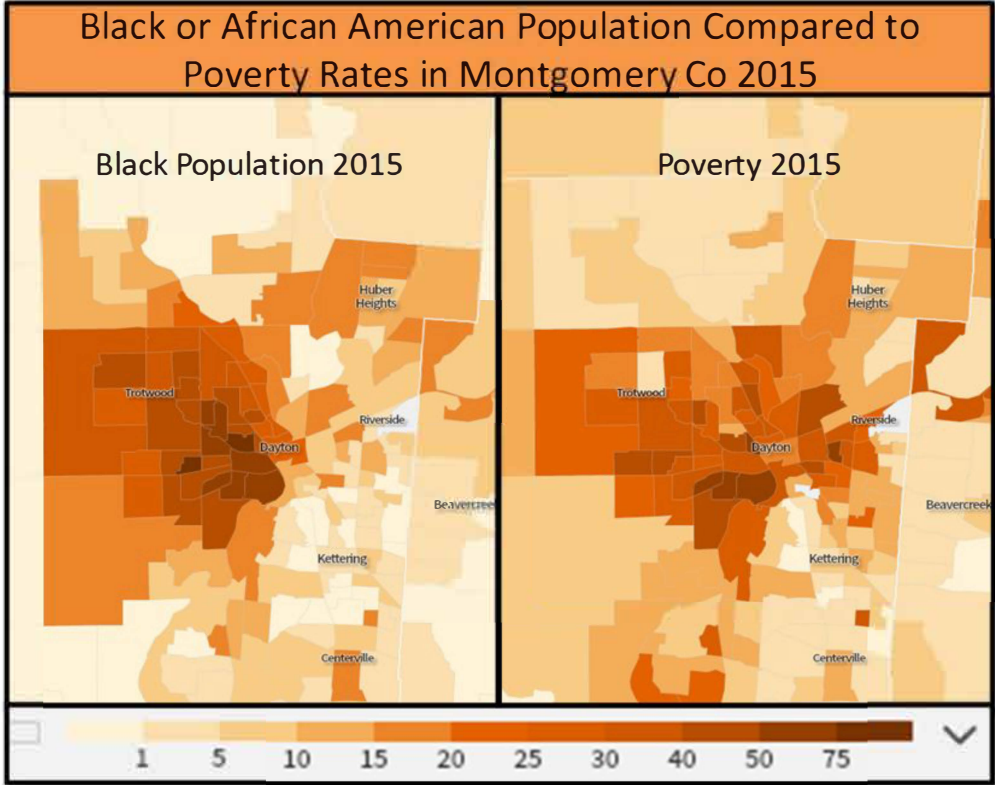
# Median Wealth



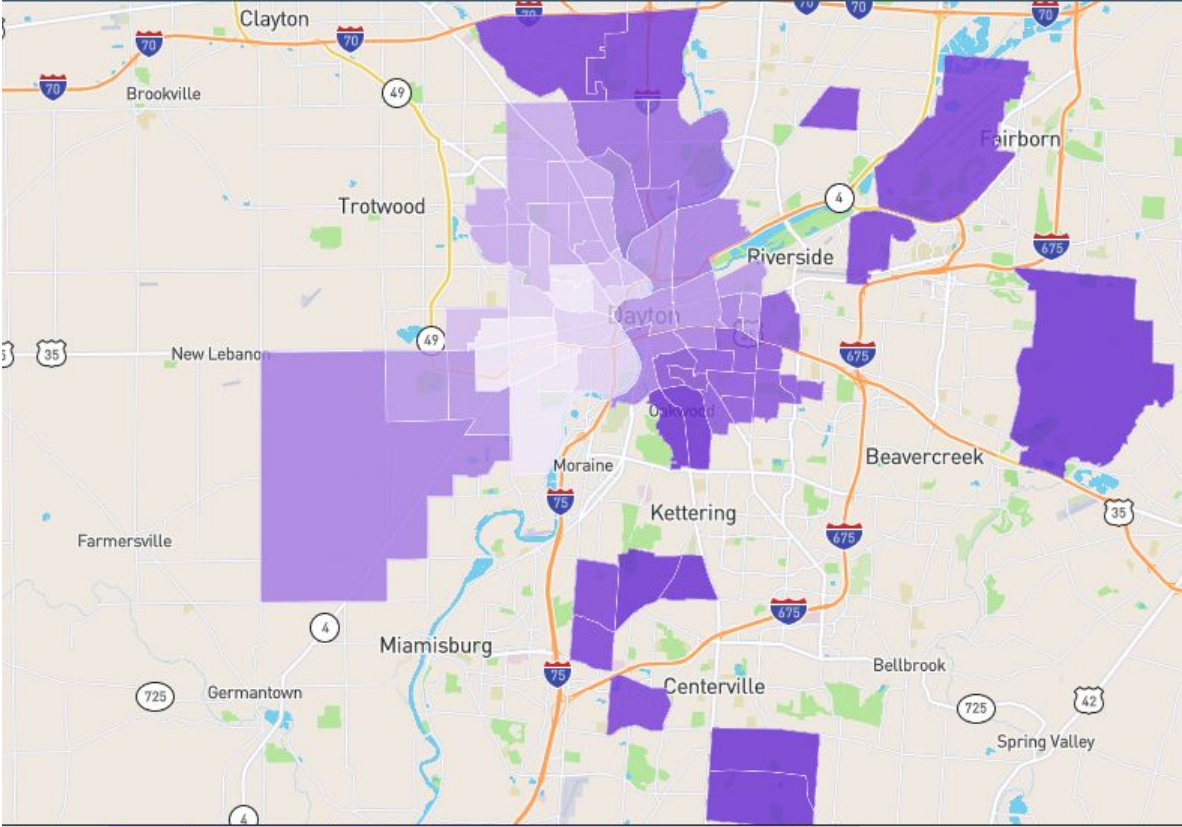
Note: All dollar figures are in 2016 dollars. Nominal dollars are deflated by Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers Research Series. Sample includes a cohort of nonretired households as they aged from between 23 to 38 years in 1989 to between 50 and 65 years in 2016.

Source: Authors' calculations based on data in survey years from 1989 to 2016 from Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, "Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF)," available at <https://www.federalreserve.gov/econres/scfindex.htm> (last accessed October 2017).





# Dayton Area School District Ratings



## Probability of lead pipes in water system

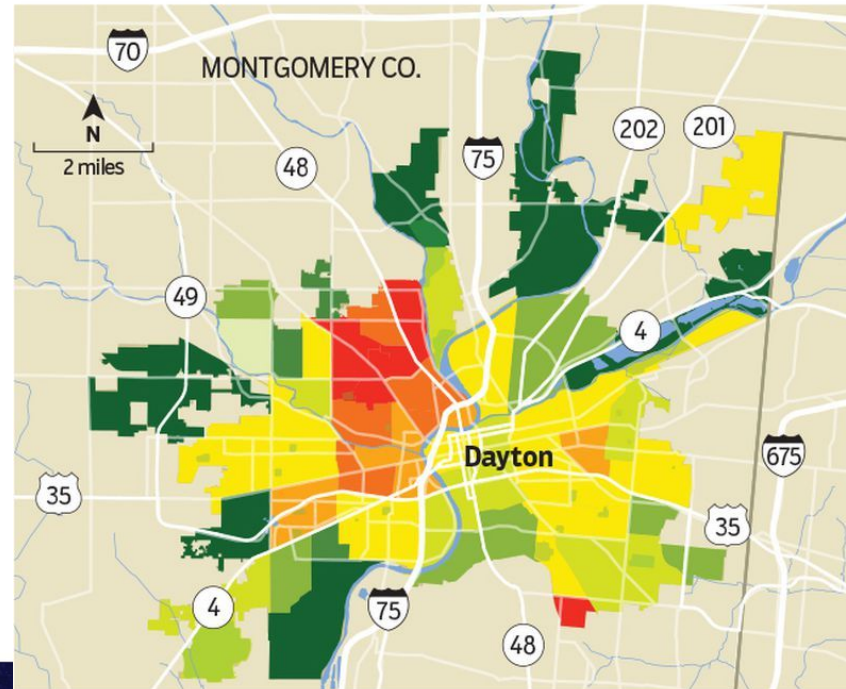
The city has used GIS mapping services to identify problematic areas of its system, a requirement under a new Ohio law. This map shows what parts of the city are more likely to have lead service lines present in the water system.

### Probability of lead service lines

Lowest Probability

Higher Probability

Highest Probability



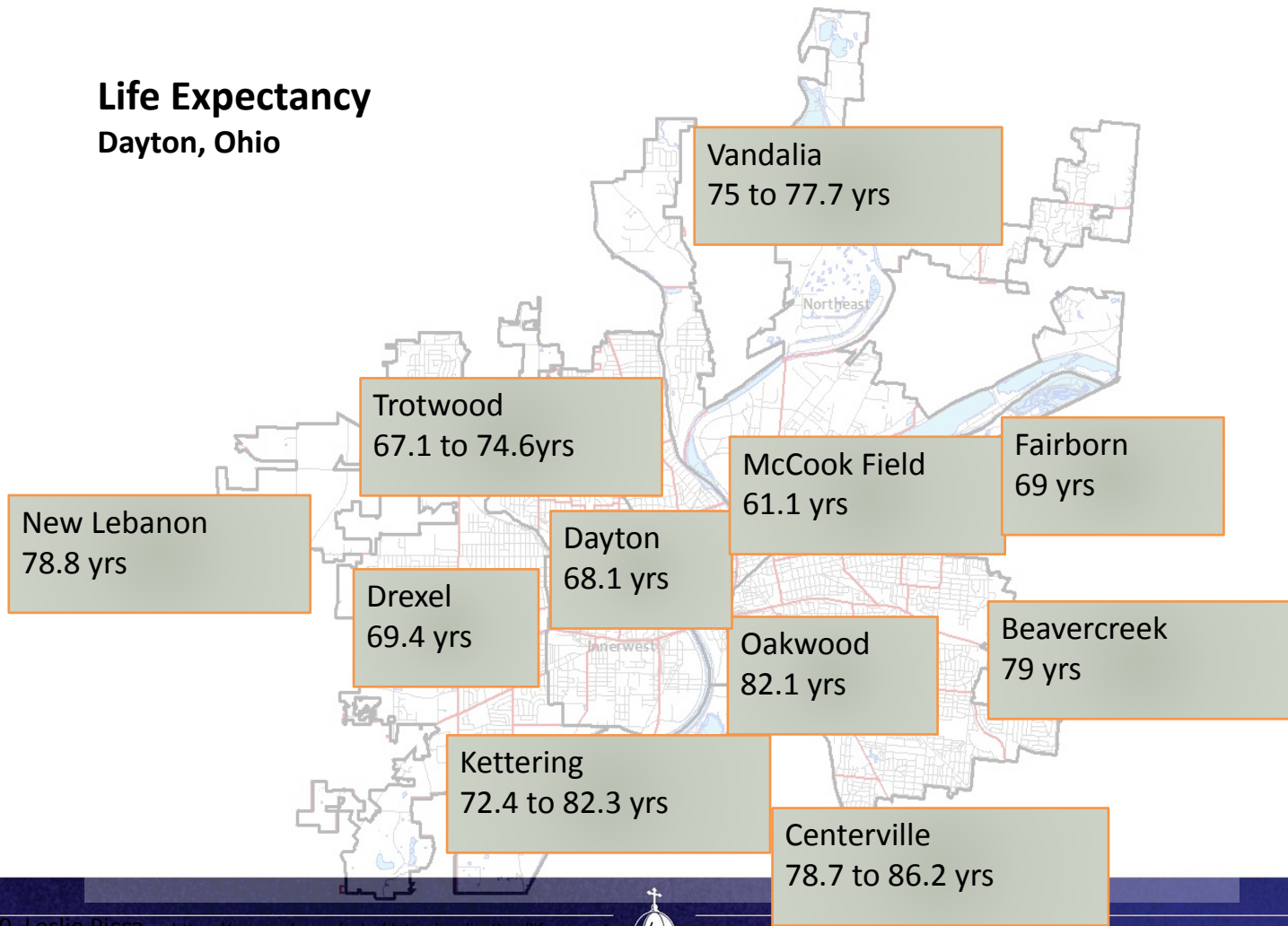
Source: City of Dayton

ROBERT CALZADA / STAFF

Source:  
<https://www.daytondailynews.com/business/investigation-city-working-identify-lead-pipes-water-system/pHy m7ziv9SvViRoFCA7IXI/>

# Life Expectancy

## Dayton, Ohio



# WHAT IS IMPLICIT BIAS?

*By Dr. Tiffany Taylor Smith*

11 MINUTES, 23 SECONDS

What might be some unconscious biases you carry based on where you grew up and went to school?

In what ways might these biases influence your personal and professional life? Where you live? Your choice of primary care physician? Where and with whom you spend your social time?

What can you do to become more aware of your unconscious biases?

**IMPLICIT BIASES ARE THE UNCONSCIOUS OR SUBCONSCIOUS ATTITUDES, THOUGHTS, AND STEREOTYPES THAT AFFECT OUR UNDERSTANDING, ACTIONS, AND DECISIONS. THE UNCONSCIOUS BIASES THAT WE CARRY ARE INFLUENCED BY OUR LIFE EXPERIENCES AND THE MESSAGES WE ARE GIVEN, EITHER INTENTIONALLY OR UNINTENTIONALLY, ABOUT OTHERS AND OURSELVES.**

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# REFLECTIONS ON THE EXPERIENCE OF A BLACK CATHOLIC

*By Sr. Nicole Trahan, FMI*

15 MINUTES, 32 SECONDS

In general, what is your reaction to Sr. Nicole's reflection? Why do you believe you had this particular reaction?

How does her experience compare/contrast with your experience?

Reflecting on the challenges offered by Sr. Nicole, what are next steps you can take?

SR. NICOLE SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF BEING A BLACK WOMAN, AND NOW A VOWED RELIGIOUS, IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND HOW THESE EXPERIENCES DIFFER DEPENDING ON THE LOCATION.

# INCHES AND SECONDS: THINKING ABOUT WHITE PRIVILEGE

*By Dr. Vince Miller*

14 MINUTES, 40 SECONDS

Have you ever had a moment when your life was decided by “inches and seconds?” What role did the forces of structural racism or privilege play in the outcome?

**Consider your own family’s housing history. What neighborhoods did your grandparents and great-grandparents live in? How does that - along with the neighborhood in which you grew up - affect the outcome of your life?**

For the story of Clyde Ross see Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations” in the resources section. To find the redlining history of your family’s neighborhoods, see The Mapping Inequality project in the resources section.

**Consider Jesus’ judgement of the nations for not seeing. How might you become more aware of what you don’t see about structural racism and white privilege? What steps can you take to see more?**

**WHEN LIFE FOR SO MANY  
COMES DOWN TO “INCHES  
AND SECONDS” THE  
INEQUALITIES CAUSED BY  
STRUCTURAL RACISM ADD UP  
TO PROFOUND INJUSTICES  
OVER TIME AND ACROSS  
GENERATIONS.**

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# CONCLUSION: A BIGGER FAITH

*By Dr. Kelly Johnson*

14 MINUTES, 38 SECONDS

What feelings have you had as you learn about the existence of racism in the church?

How does reflecting on God's faithfulness to the Church help you to process those feelings?

How might you use the pattern of repentance from the sacrament of reconciliation to help you take part in the work of anti-racism?

KELLY JOHNSON SHARES REFLECTIONS ABOUT A GRACE GOD IS EXTENDING TO US TO REPENT FROM THE SIN OF RACISM SO THAT WE CAN ENTER MORE FULLY INTO OUR JOY.



St. Josephine  
Bakhita



Venerable Augustus  
Tolton



Servant of God Thea  
Bowman

## 10 Countries with the Largest Number of Catholics, 2010

<i>Countries</i>	ESTIMATED 2010 CATHOLIC POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION THAT IS CATHOLIC, 2010	PERCENTAGE OF WORLD CATHOLIC POPULATION, 2010
Brazil	126,750,000	65.0%	11.7%
Mexico	96,450,000	85.0	8.9
Philippines	75,570,000	81.0	7.0
United States	75,380,000	24.3	7.0
Italy	49,170,000	81.2	4.6
Colombia	38,100,000	82.3	3.5
France	37,930,000	60.4	3.5
Poland	35,310,000	92.2	3.3
Spain	34,670,000	75.2	3.2
Democratic Republic of the Congo	31,210,000	47.3	2.9
<b>World Total</b>	<b>1,078,790,000</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Population estimates are rounded to the ten thousands. Percentages are calculated from unrounded numbers.  
 Figures may not add exactly due to rounding.

Pew Research Center

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# Glossary

**Just War:** a war that is deemed to be morally or religiously justifiable

**Redlining:** illegal discrimination usually based on race or neighborhood

**Race:** physical characteristics (skin color)

**Nationality:** belonging to a nation-state (citizenship)

**Ethnicity:** cultural characteristics (language, ancestry, etc.)

**Sundown Towns:** communities where blacks were allowed in during the day but must be out before the sun goes down

**Implicit Bias:** unconscious or subconscious attitudes, thoughts, stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions

**Racial Wealth Gap:** the income/ wealth gap between multiple races

**Kairos:** time of judgment

**Systemic Racism:** racism that exists because of things that are deeply ingrained into our society

**Belief Perseverance:** The Phenomenon in which people cling to their initial beliefs and the reasons why a belief might be true, even when the basis for the belief is discredited.

**Categorization:** is a cognitive process that occurs largest outside of conscious awareness and helps people to cope in a complex and demanding environment.

**Stereotyping:** the unconscious habits of thoughts that link personal attributes to group membership, is an inevitable result of categorization.

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# RESOURCES

[Mapping Inequality-Redlining in New Deal America](#)

[The Case for Reparations](#) (For more on the story of Clyde Ross see Ta-Nehisi Coates)

[Sundown Towns](#)

[Map shows racial diversity and segregation in Cincinnati](#)

[Dayton area named on list of most segregated regions](#)

[Open Wide Our Hearts](#)

[Race: The Power of Illusion](#)

[The Catholic Church and the Black Lives Matter Movement](#)

[Full List of Archdiocese of Cincinnati Resources](#)

[AOC Anti-Racism Resources](#)

# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

*This project is a collaboration between the University of Dayton and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. We want to especially thank the professors and staff at the University of Dayton who gave generously of their time and expertise to create and edit these videos and create the accompanying discussion questions. We want to thank the presenters, bios found on pages 2-4, and also those behind the scenes with the University of Dayton's media production group who donated their time and expertise to shoot and edit each video. One more big thank you goes out to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati's Anti-Racism Task Force for having the vision for this project and finding the passionate and knowledgeable people to help make it happen.*

*Special thanks to the University of Dayton Media Production Group, Brigham Fisher, Brian Mills, and Mike Kurtz. Questions or comments can be directed to [Leslie Picca](#).*

*Lastly, we want to thank the Weavers of Justice Anti-racism Task Force who first started the original workshops that were the inspiration for this project.*

