



# THE CROSSING

A quarterly newsletter of the Office for Racial Justice  
Archdiocese of Chicago

Volume 1, Issue 1  
Summer 2004

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Reader's Corner	2
Meet Summer 2004's Office Intern	3
New Staff Members	3
Special Thank You	3
Crossroads Corner	4
Workshop On Racism & Ethnic Sensitivity for 2004-2005	4

## "Best Practices" Submissions

## WANTED

We would like to add a New COLUMN titled "Best Practices" based on your submissions!

We encourage you to share with our readers what is working best at your parish in your work to dismantle racism and create more inclusive communities

Send your Best Practices to Alicia Juarez:

E-mail: [ajuarez@archchicago.org](mailto:ajuarez@archchicago.org)

Mail: Archdiocese of Chicago  
Office for Racial Justice  
P.O. Box 1979  
Chicago, IL 60690-1979  
(Attn: AJuarez, Best Practices)

## CATHOLICS UNITED FOR RACIAL JUSTICE: UNITY RALLY 2004

On Sunday May 2nd, the chilly temperatures and cold wind off Lake Michigan did not stop hundreds of Catholics from all parts of the Archdioceses of Chicago from taking a stand against racism at the first annual **Unity Rally organized by Catholics United for Racial Justice**. The event that originally was planned to take place outdoors at the Chicago Historical Society was moved indoors to the main gallery because of weather forecasts.

As one walks up to the main gallery of the Chicago Historical Society one can't help to notice the many cultures that are reflected in the faces of people on the walls; and as one entered the main gallery one would have thought that every culture was being represented by those attending the Unity Rally. "Our

theme was building communities of love," said Sister Anita Baird, director of the Archdiocese's Office for Racial Justice "...and for people to experience what it would be like if we could live like that all the time."

Truly, the event was able to accomplish this goal that day for the people present. John Garcia of ABC7 News emceed the event. The event wanted to celebrate the Archdiocese of Chicago's rich diversity and it did with the wide array of multicultural talent. The program consisted of the voices of the *Holy Trinity Our Lady of Fatima Filipino Prayer Group*; storytelling by Susan O'Halloran and

Irish dancing performed by the *Spiroard Damhsa Dancers*; Rich Rubietta's *Abounding Music*; the

*(Continued on page 3)*



Hundreds of diverse Catholics took a united stand against the sin of racism and intolerance.



## CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN PRAYING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

On Sunday, May 2nd, Catholic school children joined other Catholics at the Chicago Historical Society Plaza in the *Unity Rally* that celebrated our rich diversity as Catholics, while denouncing the sins of racism and intolerance. The event featured the following prayers written by Catholic school children:

Dear God,  
What a wonderful world it would be without hatred.  
Help us to be kind to others so we can bring peace on earth.  
Help us to try and not call others names or hurt their feelings.  
Help us to enjoy each other.

Help us to remember that all of us are different, but on the inside, we are all the same.

Help us to turn the other cheek when someone is being mean.  
Let us treat others how we want to be treated.

With your help, God, we can make the world a better place for everyone.

Amen.

**Marisa Maite, St. Vincent Ferrer/  
Grade 1**

Dear God,  
Please help me and the world to stop racism. It doesn't matter what color skin you have or what shoes you wear.  
It doesn't matter what color hair or eyes you have.

God, if the world didn't have racism, the world would be a pretty good place.

It doesn't matter what's on the outside. What matters is what's on the inside.

Amen.

**Jack Rafferty, St. John of the Cross/  
Grade 2**

Dear God,  
I pray the world may one day be a place of peace and love.  
Please help us create a better world for everyone.  
Help us get rid of all violence.  
Don't let a person's color or what type of clothes they wear or language they speak make

*(Continued on page 2)*

CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN PRAYING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

(Continued from page 1)

them be treated unfairly.

We are all your children, God.

Please show us the peace within each one of us.

Help us to make a difference .

Show us the way to begin to change things for the better.

We can help create a world where everyone is treated equally.

A world filled with peace and justice is everyone's responsibility.

Please, God, help us to all work together so that one day the world can be united in peace and justice.

Amen.

Jimmy Scigala, St. Barbara School/Grade 6

Dear Lord,

Help me understand the people who are different from me. Help me to be kind to people of a different culture, color and religion who speak a different language than me.

Dear Lord, help me not to judge, criticize

or make fun of people I do not understand.

Help me, Lord, to be friendly and loving just like your son, Jesus Christ, wants me to be.

I pray that I may have a good relationship with other people and that I may learn from them.

Thank you, dear Lord.

Amen.

Isabel Hurtado, Bridgeport Catholic Academy/Grade 5

**A Better World**

Lord, Make this world a better place for all people of different races. For all around the world there is racial discrimination and war.

There are the poor people who are treated like outsiders just because they are not as fortunate to have a good life like we do.

There is war against countries where people are getting killed. There are children who are sick that can't come home to their parents.

There is also discrimination against different races because of their heritage and culture.

Just imagine a world without hatred and everyone is treated like an equal, a place where you can enjoy the wonders of creation the way you wanted it to be.

My ideas of a better world would include people supporting the poor in starting a new life by donating food and giving them homes to sleep in day and night.

There wouldn't be any more war if countries didn't have conflicts. They would resolve conflicts without violence because violence resolves in innocent people getting killed.

Everyone would be a Samaritan to others by helping those who are hurt and taking care of the sick.

With God's help everyone in every culture and in every race can unite, and we would have a world free from hatred.

Even though the world isn't perfect, with your help this world can be a better place.

Amen.

Britany Booker, St. Philip Neri School/Grade 8



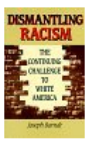
READER'S CORNER



**Color-Blind: Seeing Beyond Race in a Race-Obsessed World**  
By Ellis Cose

**Book Description**

Is a truly race-neutral society possible? Can the United States wipe the slate clean and surmount the racism of its past? Or is color blindness just another name for denial? In this penetrating and provocative book, Ellis Cose probes the depths of the American mind and exposes the contradictions, fears, hopes and illusions embedded in our complicated perceptions of race. Looking beyond the platitudes and pronouncements that tend to distort reality rather than illuminate it, Cose offers a visionary analysis of the steps we must take if we are serious about finding a true resolution to the thorny problem of race in America.



**Dismantling Racism: The Continuing Challenge to White America**  
By Joseph R. Barndt

**Book Description**

Racism has reemerged, dramatically and forcefully. All of us – people of color and white people alike – are damaged by its debilitating effects. In this book, the author addresses the "majority," the white race in the United States. Racism permeates the individual attitudes and behavior of white people, but even more seriously, it permeates public systems, institutions, and culture. This book does not intend to attack or to produce guilt, but its message is tough and demanding. It begins by analyzing racism as it is today and the ways it has changed or not changed over the past few decades. Most important, the book focuses on the task of dismantling racism, how we can work to bring it to an end and build a racially just, multiracial, and multicultural society. Churches are not strangers to the task of combating racism, but so much of what we have done is too little, too late. We have yet to make a serious impact in the racism that surrounds us and is within us.



**More Than Equals: Racial Healing for the Sake of the Gospel**  
by Spencer Perkins, Chris Rice

When Spencer Perkins was sixteen years old, he visited his bloodied and swollen father (pastor John Perkins) in jail. Police had beaten the black activist severely, and Spencer never forgot that moment. He couldn't imagine living with a white person after that. But his plans changed. Chris Rice grew up in very different circumstances, of "Vermont Yankee stock," attending an elite Eastern college and looking forward to a career in law and government. But his plans changed. Spencer and Chris became not only friends, but yokefellows—partners for more than a decade in the difficult ministry of racial reconciliation. From their own hard-won experience, they show that there is hope for our frightening race problem, that whites and African-Americans can live together in peace. This revised and updated edition includes a new introduction, new afterward, a new study guide, updated resources and a new chapter by Spencer, "Playing the Grace Card." More than ever, this book shows how the cause of racial reconciliation needs yokefellows, not solely for the sake of racial harmony but for the witness of the gospel.

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CATHOLICS UNITED FOR RACIAL JUSTICE: UNITY RALLY 2004

(Continued from page 1)

sounds of guitars, tambourines and voices of the *Immaculate Conception Estudiantina* singing songs of praise to the Lord in Spanish; the tender voices of the St. James Polish Catholic Children's Choir singing songs in Polish and the wonderful performance of The St. Ethelreda School Mime Troupe. At the end of the program, filled with The Spirit, every-



Children joining in prayer of Commitment to End Racism

one present rose from their seats to join the Black Catholic Mass Choir in their singing of songs of unity and the clapping of their hands to the rhythm of The Spirit present. And like the words that were being sung that afternoon (from the song *THEY WILL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS*) "We are One in The Spirit..." and "...in The Lord..." unity in its simplest form but in its most nurturing form was felt all around.



Brenda Thomas of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish on the North Side and Msgr. John Cardiff of St. Linus Parish in Oak Lawn, singing along with Ngoma Singers.  
Catholic New World photos/Sandy Bertog

Interwoven throughout the program were prayers written and recited by Catholic school children. All of

the children's prayers were simple and reflected hope for peace, racial harmony and human dignity which are echoed in the lyrics found in the Rally's concluding song *THEY WILL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS* "...that all unity may one day be restored."

Francis Cardinal George articulated that afternoon the same strong calling and message he gave to the Archdiocese of Chicago through his

2001 pastoral letter "Dwell in My Love." He states that "...the Gospel compels us to love our neighbor as ourselves, to abandon patterns of seeing those who are racially or culturally different from ourselves as strangers and to recognize them as our brothers and sisters..." Since, "We cannot claim to love God without loving our neighbor (Mat.22: 34 ff.)."

(The prayers by the Catholic school children are included in this issue of the newsletter.)

## NEW STAFF MEMBERS IN ORJ

**Javier Garcia** joined the staff in October of 2003. He is part of the support staff for the office, helps put things together for the workshops and provides technical support for the workshops. He is also in charge of the Dwell in My Love website. He earned his Associates in Arts degree as an administrative assistant and computer software specialist from Fox College.

*"I feel very passionate about working on racial justice issues,"*

sist of seminars, testimonials and talks that bring awareness to participants regarding the sin of racism. The workshops allow people to bring racism down to a more personal level, where stories and experiences with discrimination are shared among the participants.

"I feel very passionate about working on racial justice issues," she said. "I hope to bring forth a transformation, not just for individuals, but also for institutions and society."

**Alicia Juarez** is the new Associate Director for the Office for Racial Justice (ORJ). Her appointment was announced by Sr. Anita Baird, Director of the Office for Racial Justice on March 15.

Among her primary responsibilities, Juarez will coordinate workshops on racism in both Spanish and English in a culturally sensitive manner throughout parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago. These daylong workshops con-

Prior to working for the Office for Racial Justice, she worked as health education coordinator at Alivio Medical Center in the Pilsen neighborhood. She has worked with other organizations and parishes on community organizing projects, health fairs, and justice issues.

Both may be reached during the Pastoral Center's Business Hours: 9:00 a.m.—4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday @ (312) 751-5380.

*Thank You!*

## CATHOLICS UNITED FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

The Office for Racial Justice will like to extend a special thank you to the members of the Unity Rally's planning committee for their dedication and hard work to make the event a success.

Members of the committee:

- Larry Adams
- Frank Christiano
- Maureen Collins
- Perla Erickson
- Ellen Kilmurry
- Kris Kurds
- Dan McGuire
- Faye Russell
- Evelyn Slater
- Robert Szymanski

## MEET SUMMER 2004'S OFFICE INTERN

I would like to extend my gratitude and blessings to the staff members of the Office for Racial Justice for inviting me to participate in learning about the numerous challenges surrounding institutional racism in our Church and society. I have just completed my second year of theological studies at the University St. Mary of the Lake / Mundelein Seminary in preparation for priestly ordination for the Archdiocese of Chicago in May of 2006. I am grateful to Sr. Anita Baird, D.H.M. for graciously accepting me to be a part of this proactive initiative in the fight against racism for the next two months. I eagerly anticipate working with the many members and associates of the Office for Racial Justice, the presbyterate of Chicago and the many individuals whose voices speak out against the injustice of racism. I pray that this experience will be fruitful and offer new insights of faith, hope and trust in building bridges of unity, which cross over racial and cultural barriers.

Peace always,

Seminarian Thomas Belanger  
Intern / Office for Racial Justice



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the Office for Racial Justice  
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**We are on the Web!**

[http://www.archchicago.org/  
departments/racial\\_justice/  
racial\\_justice.shtm](http://www.archchicago.org/departments/racial_justice/racial_justice.shtm)

## Crossroads Corner

Meet us at the crossroads and tell us what you are doing in your parishes and schools to combat the sin of racism. All submitted stories and photos will become the property of the Office for Racial Justice. Photos will not be returned.

### *Send information to:*

Archdiocese of Chicago  
Office for Racial Justice  
P.O. Box 1979  
Chicago, IL 60690-1979

### Office Staff

#### **Anita Baird, D.H.M.**

Director

#### **Alicia Juarez**

Associate Director

*Workshops on Racism & Ethnic Sensitivity*

#### **Lois Prebil, osf**

*Racism Workshop Phase 2 Facilitator*

#### **Gloria Mathis**

Administrative Assistant

#### **Javier Garcia**

Support Staff

Phone: 312-751-5380  
Fax: 312-867-2589

## Upcoming Events!

Racial Justice Week  
*January 17-23, 2004*

Dwell in My Love Sunday  
*January 23, 2004*

## WORKSHOP ON RACISM & ETHNIC SENSITIVITY FOR 2004-2005

To register for *Phase I* Workshop parishes should contact Alicia Juarez at (312) 751-8348. To register for *Phase II* Workshop parishes should contact Sr. Lois Prebil, osf at (708) 442-3414.

Parishes must complete *Phase I* training before *Phase II*.

### Little known Workshop facts...

- 294 parishes have completed Phase I training
- 158 parishes have completed Phase 2
- 125 parishes have completed Phase 3
- 2,515 people have completed Phase I
- Vicariate VI has the largest number of parishes (64) that completed Phase I training. *Congratulations!*

### Workshop Dates

#### Phase I

December 4, 2004

January 22, 2005  
(Filled)

April, 16, 2005

June 11, 2005

#### Phase II

September 11 & 18, 2004

February 19 & 26, 2005