

Homily Framework:

Racial Justice and the Catholic Faith

1. The Theological Foundation: Image and Likeness

The starting point for any Catholic discourse on race is the divine origin of the human person.

- **The Intent of the Creator:** Discrimination based on race or colour must be eradicated as it is fundamentally contrary to God's intent.
- **An Affront to Dignity:** The CBCEW (2025) teaches that racism is an affront to the dignity of the human person, who is created in the image and likeness of God.
- **Natural Equality:** As stated in *Pacem in Terris*, all people are equal in dignity by nature, and truth itself demands the elimination of racial discrimination.

2. The Sin of Racism: A Spiritual Crisis

Racism is not merely a social or political issue; it is a profound failure of faith and charity.

- **A Radical Denial:** The Church defines racism as a "sin" and a "scourge" that acts as a radical denial of a person's fundamental dignity.
- **Betraying the Gospel:** To engage in or tolerate racism is a denial of the truth of the Gospel.
- **A Mutating Virus:** Pope Francis warns in *Fratelli Tutti* that racism is a "virus that quickly mutates," hiding in wait only to emerge again.

3. The Consistent Ethic of Life

A homily should challenge the faithful to see racial justice as an essential pillar of the Church's pro-life mission.

- **Defending the Sacred:** We cannot claim to defend the sacredness of every human life while turning a blind eye to racism.
- **The Seamless Garment:** If we value life from conception to natural death, we must also value the quality and dignity of that life against the "social death" of discrimination.

4. Justice and the Common Good

The Church's mission includes a duty to ensure that society reflects the justice of the Kingdom of God.

- **Fair Access:** According to *Octogesima Adveniens*, all people should be equal before the law and possess fair access to economic, cultural, and social life.
- **Opposing Marginalisation:** The Church has a moral duty to oppose all forms of discrimination to ensure no group in society is marginalised.
- **Inseparable Concepts:** Justice cannot be separated from the common good; the two must work in tandem to support every member of the human family.

5. Call to Action: The Path to Reconciliation

A homily must move the congregation toward concrete change (*metanoia*).

- **Examine the Heart:** If racism is a "virus," we must constantly examine our own hearts and parish structures for its presence.

- **Eucharistic Solidarity:** In receiving the Eucharist, we commit to being "one body." This requires us to actively work for the "fair access" to social and parish life described in Church teaching.
- **Breaking the Silence:** Following the guidance of the CBCEW, we must speak up, for to remain silent is to ignore a "denial of the truth of the Gospel".