



Dreams of the Beloved Community: 50th Anniversary of 'I have a Dream' speech by Martin Luther King

**50 years
on, where
are we now?**

**You shall love your
neighbour as yourself**
Matthew 22: 36-40

**Racial Justice Sunday
8 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Designed by First Presence and CARJ

Printed by Merivale Press Ltd

Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Background	6
3. Biblical reflection	12
4. Homily suggestions	14
5. Hymn suggestions	18
6. Prayer suggestions	19
7. Activity suggestions	22
8. Take further action	26
9. Feedback form	28
10. Order form	29

1. Introduction

Dreams of the Beloved Community: 50th Anniversary of 'I have a Dream' speech by Martin Luther King

You shall love your neighbour as yourself

Matthew 22:36-40

Racial Justice Sunday enables Christian communities across Britain and Ireland with the opportunity to focus on the issue of ending racism and racial inequality. On Racial Justice Sunday 2013, churches, schools, groups and individuals are invited to mark the day by mobilising together in prayer, work and action to raise awareness of the 50th Anniversary of the 'I have a Dream' speech by Dr Martin Luther King and to ask 50 years on, where are we now?

The 28 August 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of Dr Martin Luther King Junior's monumental 'I have a Dream' speech. The speech spoke about all God's people living in freedom and peace in a world governed by truth and justice. It called for liberty, equality and justice for all people, regardless of their racial heritage. Dr King's dream centred on a 'Beloved Community', a society built on justice, equality and freedom for all God's people which was rooted in scripture, particularly in Revelation 7:9-10. The speech remains an inspirational call for us to work for a fairer and more equitable world now.

The face of racism looks different today from how it looked in the past. Overt racism is easily condemned, but the sin of racism is often with us in more subtle forms. As Christians we are called to act to build justice and peace around racial equality and identity issues. We are called to welcome the stranger and to be hospitable to those who are different. As the problem of racism and racial inequality continue, there is an ongoing moral need for us to work for anti-racism and racial equality now.

In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells us 'You shall love your neighbour as

yourself'. We need to be prepared to follow the example of the life and teachings of Jesus who was prepared to reach out to people across ethnic divides and to embrace all disadvantaged and marginalised communities. Jesus encouraged the creation of communities of inclusion, fairness and equality to reflect God's unlimited love, concern and compassion for all people, and so we need to build those also.

This Racial Justice Sunday resource pack is intended to serve as a resource for you and can be used as an advocacy resource at any time during the year. We hope that you will find the materials helpful.

Catholic Social Teaching on racial equality

Racism in all its forms contradicts Catholic Social Teaching, which calls for respect for the human dignity of every person. The creation of human beings by God 'in God's own image' confers upon every human person a distinct dignity and it also provides the basis for the fundamental equality of all human beings. For the Church, this equality, which is rooted in being, acquires the dimension of an altogether special brotherhood and sisterhood through the Incarnation of Jesus. In the Redemption effected by Jesus Christ, the Church sees a further basis of the rights and duties of the human person. Therefore every form of discrimination based on race is completely unacceptable.

Christians are heirs of a religious teaching that proclaims that all men and women, as children of God, are brothers and sisters. Every form of discrimination against individuals and groups whether because of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, economic status, or national or cultural origin is a serious injustice which severely weakens the social fabric and deprives a country of the unique contributions of many of its citizens.

Racism will continue until we challenge it. Patterns of racism can be in our hearts but are also in our national institutions and world systems that produce racial inequality. To address racism it needs an internal transformation including forgiveness and conversion as we open our hearts and minds but also external transformation in our institutions both public and private and their policies, procedures, operations and culture.

2. Background



The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, 1963

On Wednesday 28 August 1963 Martin Luther King delivered his historic 'I have a Dream' speech advocating liberty, equality and justice for all people regardless of their racial and ethnic background at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

The speech was delivered in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. in the United States. Martin Luther King joined over 250,000 of his fellow Americans to commemorate the centenary of President Abraham Lincoln's 'Emancipation Proclamation' to free African-Americans and which made the removal of slavery an explicit aim. Lincoln, who was the USA's 16th President, is often known as the Great Emancipator for this historic act.

Rev Dr Martin Luther King Junior, a 34 year old Baptist pastor and civil rights leader

was in Washington to argue that the freedoms promised by President Lincoln to the newly-emancipated African-Americans never really materialised, and the March on Washington was an attempt to encourage all Americans to re-commit themselves to the Emancipation Proclamation's original promise.

Although African Americans had been given legal citizenship, they remained second-class citizens. Many continued to face legal, political, social and economic discrimination and segregation, from businesses and government in places like buses, libraries, swimming pools, lunch counters and hotels. They faced extreme poverty and in some places they were prevented from voting through intimidation and violence.



The Dream speech inspired a nation and resonates across time and geography

The speech was an urgent appeal for racial justice and equality. Fifty years later the speech endures as a defining moment in the civil rights movement in the ongoing struggle for racial equality.

The speech came amid increasingly intense battles to end segregation in the South - where civil rights activists' commitment to the principles of nonviolence advocated by Martin Luther King were severely put to the test. Dogs and fire hoses were turned on peaceful demonstrators and civil rights leaders were being imprisoned and murdered. News reports from civil rights frontline battlefields rarely mentioned voting rights, jobs, work, dignity, justice and freedom.





The speech stirred the moral conscience of millions. Speaking prophetically and repeatedly about his Dream of lives lived without injustice and discrimination, he said 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal....I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character...We are not satisfied and will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream', and his call to action – 'to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope' - echoes still.

The march was organized by hundreds of committed civil rights activists including trade union and labour and religious organizations, who worked to fundraise for the march calling for 'jobs, and freedom'. The March was supported by the presence of Hollywood celebrities who added credibility to the solemn call for equality. At the time, the march was strongly opposed by the US government.

It is estimated that around 75% of the 250,000 participants were Black while the rest were White. Most White Americans had never seen such a large demonstration organised by Black Americans with a message of tolerance, peace and determination.

The march was one of the largest political rallies for human rights, civil rights and economic rights in the history of the United States and was critical in assisting the passing of the Civil Rights Act 1964 and the Voting Rights Act 1965, which outlawed discrimination in every part of American life, including the ballot box.

The courage and commitment to justice, peace and non-violence in the Dream speech proved to be a critical and momentous tipping point for American civil rights. The speech has gone on to resound throughout the world - in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and South America, as an appeal for racial justice and equality and 50 years after it was given it has a relevant message for us still.



So 50 years on from 1963, where are we now? A reality check on racial inequality

The reality is that in 2013 the world remains a very unequal place, and while the re-election of a Black man to the White House is a significant step forward in terms of progress on racial equality and is hugely symbolic, it has done relatively little to bring in Dr King's 'Beloved Community'.

The UK context

In the UK we need to be aware of the current issues and changing patterns around racism, racial inequality and identity. While the past 50 years has seen some significant progress in racial equality, our society is still marked by racial discrimination and inequality for many. In practical terms that means that the ethnic group that you are born into still has a significant impact on your life chances. The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population is now 14% and the 'White Other' population (including those from Eastern Europe) is now 4% of the overall population.

For many the progress made on eradicating racism and achieving racial equality has been too slow. The current context in the UK includes British politicians pandering to the worst instincts of the population over the possibilities of 'mass immigration' and 'swamping' from EU Bulgarians and Romanians in 2014. It also includes controversial Home Office initiatives such as 'Go Home' advertising vans aimed supposedly at illegal migrants which are seen as divisive and offensive.

The Stephen Lawrence case

In the UK, the year 2013 also marks the 20th anniversary of the racist murder of 18 year old Stephen Lawrence on 22 April 1993. Due to the mishandled police operation, no-one was brought to justice until 2012 and even now not all the men involved in the teenagers death have been convicted. The murder led to the Macpherson report and 20 years of discussion about race relations in Britain as society failed to protect Stephen and to deliver justice to his family. We also need to remember that more than 100 people have died as a result of racist attacks in the UK since Stephen Lawrence's murder in 1993.



Examples of racial inequality

Despite changes in the law, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities still regularly experience worse services in education, health, housing and criminal justice sectors compared to the White British population.

- BME communities have worse health due to their higher rates of poverty, unemployment, area deprivation and lower incomes
- Gypsy and Traveller people experience significantly higher rates of suicide and infant and maternal death. There is a severe lack of suitable Traveller sites which result in 14% of Travellers living on the roadside or unauthorised encampments.
- Young Black British males are more likely to go to prison than university
- In 2000, 1 in 20 Black people were stopped and searched. By 2010 this had increased to 1 in 10. Black people are seven times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police compared to White people
- Unemployment rates for of Bangladeshi and Pakistani women stand at 20.5% and Black women at 17.7% compared to 6.8% for White women
- An estimated 5% of teachers and less than 5% of headteachers and deputies are from BME communities, although 20% of the pupil population are from BME backgrounds. BME communities are also under-represented in Higher Education, as both academic and support staff
- Chinese-British students outperform all others academically, yet earn on average 25% less than their White counterparts after they graduate

The USA context

While there has been some significant progress on racial equality over the past 50 years, in reality many serious racial inequalities remain in the USA. Census research in 2012 show that Blacks and Minority Ethnic communities remain at an increased disadvantage because of past and current institutional practices. For example, Black people in the United States face nearly twice the risk of living in poverty as average Americans with Black household income standing at only 55 percent of White household income. The Black unemployment rate ran at twice the rate of White unemployment, 14.1 to 7.2% in August 2012.



Some people argue that the election of Barack Obama as America's first Black president is the fulfilment of Dr King's dream, and the beginning of a 'postracial' society. Many have pointed to the poignancy of Barack Obama's second term inauguration in this historic year of 2013.

However other inequalities that have hit the media headlines include the shooting of 17 year old Trayvon Martin in 2012 by a man staying in the same housing complex who was then acquitted and the Supreme Court decision to remove key sections of the Voting Rights Act 1965 that protected Black voters.

The US Civil Rights campaigner and politician, Revd Jesse Jackson, who was a contemporary of Dr King and was with him on the night he died, used a famous sporting metaphor as a prescription for equality. He said, 'When the rules are known by all, the start is equal, and the playing field is level, we will have all the ingredients for real equality.'



The way forward - hope for the future

Although racism and racial inequality continue to be a problem in many societies, we should remember that we also have the power to eradicate it through our determination and commitment in working for that goal.

3. Biblical reflection



Wisdom 9: 13-18

The Book of Wisdom speaks of the Spirit being sent from above to straighten the paths of those on earth and to teach them what is pleasing to God. Martin Luther King had a very clear understanding of the healing presence of God. With clear reference to the Prophet Isaiah, he said that his dream was about every hill and mountain being laid low and the crooked places made straight. On the night before he was killed, he gave another of his inspirational speeches. There, with echoes of Moses on Mount Nebo, he declared that he could now see the unstoppable movement of the Spirit straightening the roads and leading his people to the promised land of freedom.

Psalm 89

The writer is very much aware of the limitations of humanity and prays that we all become more aware of them so as to gain the wisdom that opens us up to the help of God. If we are to establish 'the Dream', the Kingdom of God, where the sons of slaves will sit down with the sons of slave owners, we cannot do this without God's intervention. So, O God, fill us with your love and make that dream a reality.

Philemon 9-10, 12-17

Paul is sending Onesimus back to Philemon, after Onesimus has become a believer in Christ. Paul hopes Philemon will receive Onesimus not as a slave but as a beloved brother, so he is being asked to extend the hand of friendship across social divides. A Christian should surely be looking to extend the hand of friendship across the divides, whatever the cost, seeing all who do the will of God as a brother or sister. There are different ways we can create an 'us' and 'them' world. For example, since 9/11 attack in the USA and the 7/7 bombings in London, there are many who would create such a world with Muslims on one side and the liberal West on the other. The letter reminds us that by virtue of belonging to Christ that we become brothers and sisters in the family of God and that unjust social, racial and class distinctions have no place in the Church and in society.

Luke 14: 25-33

The language of Luke's Gospel refers to the cost of discipleship and seems harsh to our ears. 'If a man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brother or sister....he cannot be my disciple.' But we have to understand this in the light of other passages of scripture. For example, Jesus also said 'whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, that person is my brother and sister and mother.' And we also read, 'Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar' (1 John 4:20). What Jesus seems to be warning us against is the sort of exclusivist relationships which create an 'us' and 'them' world. If we help our own family members who are suffering but we ignore people in similar situations from other groups, we cannot claim to be disciples of Christ.

4. Homily suggestions



Homily suggestion 1

Fifty years ago in the USA, Martin Luther King delivered his most famous speech where he declared, 'I have a dream'. In that speech he described the African Americans of his day as being 'battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality.' They would often be humiliated as they were faced with official signs declaring, 'For whites only!' They knew the cost of racism! King was to suggest a response that issued from the depths of his Christian faith and was inspirational.

There are actually several elements of King's suggested response in today's readings. The first concerns the rejection of a narrow understanding of identity. Yes, the language of Luke's Gospel seems harsh to our ears. 'If a man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brother or sister....he cannot be my disciple.' But we have to understand this in the light of other passages of scripture. For example, Jesus also said 'whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, that person is my brother and sister and mother.' And we also read, 'Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar' (1 John 4:20).

What Jesus seems to be warning us against is the sort of exclusivist relationships which create an 'us' and 'them' world. If you help your own family members who are suffering but you ignore people in similar situations from other groups, we cannot claim to be disciples of Christ.

In his famous speech, Martin Luther King clearly understood the warning of Jesus and the dream which he presented was an inclusive one. It even included the white racists who were doing such harm to the African Americans of his day. 'I have a dream' he said, 'that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.' He acknowledged that the freedom of white people was inextricably linked to the freedom of black people and that no group can walk alone on that journey to freedom.

The second element from today's readings reflected in the speeches of Martin Luther King is the presence of the Spirit in creation. The Book of Wisdom speaks of that Spirit being sent from above to straighten the paths of those on earth and to teach them what is pleasing to God. King had a very clear understanding of that healing presence of God. With clear reference to the Prophet Isaiah, he said that his dream was about every hill and mountain being laid low and the crooked places made straight. On the night before he was killed, he gave another of his inspirational speeches. There, with echoes of Moses on Mount Nebo, he declared that he could now see the unstoppable movement of the Spirit straightening the roads and leading his people to the promised land of freedom. 'Something's happening' he said. 'He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land.' In that place, as the Book of Revelation tells us, we will see people from every nation and language. When we work together with the Spirit of God, nothing will stop us reaching that destination.

Earlier, I referred to the cost of racism which Martin Luther King had briefly portrayed in his 'dream' speech, but he also knew the cost of addressing it. He knew that the only way to achieve the dream he put before them was a way that reflected the Christian cross. This is a way that enables us, in King's words, 'to hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.' He spoke too of the need to 'rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.' His very ability to dream that the sons of former slave owners would sit with the sons of former slaves around the table of brotherhood requires the type of forgiveness we see from the Christian cross. King weighed the cost and gave his life!

But 50 years on Martin Luther King's dream has still to be held before us, as has his way to achieving that dream. There is, undoubtedly, much more freedom for the African Americans of today with one of their number being the current

President of the USA. But there are many inequalities that still adversely affect people of African descent and other peoples throughout the world who are different from the established group. There are different ways too that we create an 'us' and 'them' world. Since 9/11 and the 7/7 bombings in London, there are many who would create such a world with Muslims on one side and the liberal West on the other. In an 'us' and 'them' world, it's inevitable that people are pushed further to the extremes on both sides and much more power is given to the extremists.

A Christian should surely be looking to extend the hand of friendship across the divides, whatever the cost, seeing all who do the will of God as a brother or sister. A Christian should surely be able to see the work of the Spirit amongst Muslims as well as Christians. Two years ago, a young man from Oldham was taken hostage in Northern Nigeria by Islamist extremists and later killed by them. It would be too easy for many simply to see Islam as the problem and to justify their prejudice on the basis, supposedly, of religion. But what was not widely reported at the time was that a Muslim cleric tried to intervene on the young man's behalf and was killed for having the audacity to do so. The funeral service was emotionally charged but there were Muslims present, along with the many others, who tried to support the deceased man's family in their grief. The Spirit is at work amongst Christians and Muslims and, as Martin Luther King said, albeit referring to different groups of people, 'their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.'

Homily suggestion 2

Dr King's dream centred on a 'Beloved Community', a society built on justice, equality and freedom for all God's people which was rooted in scripture, particularly in Revelation 7:9-10.

'After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'

Dr King was sometimes criticised as a 'dreamer' who needed to wake up to the nightmare facing African-Americans at that time. Moreover, his notion of a 'Beloved Community' was denounced as utopian nonsense – something that would never happen in America or the world.

Dreams and visions feature heavily in the Bible, especially in what we know as the Old Testament. In the book of Genesis we read about Joseph, a man who knew a thing or two about freedom and slavery. Like Dr King, Joseph was also

something of a 'dreamer' (Genesis 37 and 40), and was told by his brothers that his dreams were fanciful. Joseph had dreams, and he also interpreted those of others. What is interesting is that some of those dreams came true almost immediately. The Cup Bearer's and the Baker's dreams came to fruition in three days (Genesis 40). Conversely, Joseph's dreams, for which he received his brothers' ire, only culminated when he became an adult (Genesis 37:1-11). What is more, the dreams that brought Joseph to national prominence in Egypt, Pharaoh's seven years of abundance and famine dreams, involved the hard work and diligence of the people, for it to come true (Genesis 41:1-41). God revealed to Joseph what would take place in Egypt, but the Egyptians had to act in order for the prophecy to become reality, to avoid tragedy, and to make their country a place to which others would flock.

The terms 'dreams' and 'visions' are used almost interchangeably in some sections of the Bible. However, we often confer negative attributes on a 'dreamer', while giving positive ones to a 'visionary'. Who decides whether someone is labelled a dreamer or a visionary? How far is it influenced by their own views? Do we ever agree on whether someone is or has been a visionary?

Dr King's dreams of a 'Beloved Community', like Joseph's, were rooted in the word of God, and he called on all Americans to take action: to march, boycott, petition, picket and vote to make his dream a reality.

On a basic level the verses from Genesis 37 (Joseph's dream), 40 (the Cup Bearer's and the Baker's dreams) and 41 (Pharaoh's dreams) tell us that dreams can take time to become reality. They also tell us that we sometimes have to work - physically, spiritually and emotionally - to make them come true.

Dr King has shown us that his dream will only become a reality in our lifetime if we commit ourselves to the ideals he held dear. What would a 'Beloved Community' look like in 2013? What would it mean for us globally, nationally and locally?

5. Hymn suggestions

Go forth and tell

Go forth and tell! O Church of God, awake!
God's saving news to all the nations take
Proclaim Christ Jesus, Savior, Lord, and King
That all the world His worthy praise may sing

Go forth and tell! God's love embraces all
He will in grace respond to all who call
How shall they call if they have never heard
The gracious invitation of His Word!

Go forth and tell! Where still the darkness lies
In wealth or want, the sinner surely dies
Give us, O Lord, concern of heart and mind
A love like Yours which cares for all mankind

Go forth and tell! The doors are open wide
Share God's good gifts-let no one be denied
Live out your life as Christ, your Lord, shall choose
Your ransomed pow'rs for His sole glory use

Go forth and tell! O Church of God, arise!
Go in the strength which Christ, your Lord, supplies
Go till all nations His great name adore
And serve Him, Lord and King, forevermore

(To the tune Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord)

By J. E. Seddon © Mrs M. Seddon/Jubilate Hymns

Other hymn suggestions

All are welcome, Marty Haugen, Laudate no. 458
The hymns below are linked to Dr King and the civil rights movement. These can be found on YouTube.

Take My Hand, Precious Lord, Mahalia Jackson's version
His Eye on the Sparrow, Mahalia Jackson's version
Just a Closer Walk with Thee, Ella Fitzgerald

6. Prayer suggestions

Good and gracious God

who loves and delights in all people

we stand in awe before You

knowing that the spark of life within each person on earth is the spark of your divine life

Differences among cultures and races are multicoloured manifestations of Your Light

May our hearts and minds be open to celebrate similarities and differences among our sisters and brothers

We place our hopes for racial harmony in our committed action and in Your Presence in our Neighbour

May all peoples live in Peace

Amen.

Heavenly Father

we thank you for those brave men and women who

armed only with a faith in a God of truth and justice stood up for equality and human rights

By the power of your Holy Spirit

help us to become change makers

who courageously work to transform your world

into one where all are afforded the dignity, respect and worth deserving of those made in your image

Amen.

Lord, Jesus Christ

who reached across the ethnic boundaries

between Samaritan, Roman and Jew

who offered fresh sight to the blind

and freedom to captive

help us to break down the barriers in our community

enable us to see the reality of racism and bigotry

and free us to challenge and uproot it

from ourselves, our society, and the world

Amen.

Spirit of God

you are the breath of creation

the wind of change that blows through our lives

opening us up to new dreams and new hopes

new life in Jesus Christ

Forgive us our closed minds which barricade themselves against new ideas

preferring the past to what you might want to do through us tomorrow

Forgive our closed eyes which fail to see the needs of your world

blind to opportunities of service and love

Forgive our closed hands which clutch our gifts and our wealth for our own use
alone

Forgive us our closed hearts which limit our affections to ourselves and our own

Spirit of new life, forgive us and break down the prison walls of our selfishness

that we might be open to your love

and open for the service of your world

Amen.

Merciful Lord

we consider your wonderful world

and its beautiful people created in your image

and we ask for forgiveness for behaviours and attitudes

that devalue or demean those who are different

Forgive us for our tacit acceptance of a society

where privilege, partiality and advantage

are often the passports to success and wealth

Have mercy on us for ignoring the reality of racism and bigotry

which deny or curtail the rights and opportunities

of those of different ethnicities and cultures

Give us the courage, determination and honesty

to fight for a society governed by justice, equity and compassion

and underpinned by the belief that each person has an inherent worth

and must be afforded the dignity and respect they deserve

Enable us to value diversity, as you do, and encourage it in all forms

This we ask in your precious name

Amen.

O Lord

we consider your wonderful world
and its beautiful people created in your image
We thank you for the splendour of its diversity
and the fact that our country is now a microcosm of the world
with people from all places, with different faces, sharing the same spaces
Lord Jesus, we ponder your life, where you showed compassion to all
especially those forced to exist on the margins of society
through no fault of their own
You show us how we ought to respond to difference
through love and compassion rather than fear and ignorance
We praise you that all dreams of a united, equitable world will come true
because you have revealed them in scriptures that are always fulfilled
By your Spirit, inspire us to work for a time when all your people
will be able to take advantage of the world you created
Amen.

Loving Lord

we thank you for breaking the bonds of sin
and releasing us to be the people you want us to be
May we never take the freedom we enjoy for granted
but be inspired by your call to set the captives free
to help those whose lives are characterised
by oppression rather than freedom
injustice rather than equality
and bigotry rather than fairness
We pray for a time when all will be set free from the bonds
of partiality, poverty and pride to experience true freedom
Amen.

O God

Your children of all colours
Have been hurt by racism
Help us heal together
Help us do the inner work
To be open to your grace
And to the 'balm in Gilead'
So our hearts are converted
And we can join hands
To do the constructive work
Of love and justice
Amen.

7. Activities for children, young people and adults



a. An activity on the 'I have a Dream' speech

Dr King's speech can be watched on the US National Archives channel on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyR8h9iimw4>

Watch or listen to it together. Afterwards, you could ask these questions:

What part(s) made the strongest impression on you?

What would it have been like to be there that day?

What might you have done as a result of hearing it?

b. A prayer activity

Ask everyone to stand up and turn to face another person. One person keeps their arms by their side and tries to move them up to a horizontal position – like the way a bird flaps its wings.

Their partner tries to hold down their arms by gripping them gently around the wrist or lower arm. After a short while the partner releases their grip, allowing

them to lift their arms freely.

Those who have had their arms held down will feel an immediate sense of release and lightness as they lift them. This should be symbolic of the 'freedom' experienced by someone no longer in bondage.

Swap roles and allow the other person to experience the sense of freedom.

c. See, judge and act

Using the methodology of 'See, Judge and Act', encourage people to:

See: Identify what they would like to change in their parish or school to enhance equality.

Judge: In the light of Revelation 7.9-10 what is Jesus calling them to articulate within their environment?

Questions to reflect on include:

- Examining our own biases and positions of privilege through self-reflection, and how to work earnestly to resolve them
- How we can live by compassion and be consciously inclusive of all individuals?
- How we can affirm the value of diversity?
- How we can promote understanding, inclusion, and mutual respect and thus build community within all races, ethnicities and cultures?
- How we can transform our institutions into authentically anti-racist and anti-oppressive communities of action?
- How we can advocate for justice, demand equal opportunity for all and so help create a beloved community for everyone to share?

Act: What steps can they take to bring about the change they envisage?

Read Martin Luther King's speech and pick out themes for a 'Thought for the Day'. This can be put on the parish or student noticeboard over a period of a month.

d. A call to action being an inclusive church

The Christian community has a responsibility to demonstrate the values of their faith, and has a role to play at the cutting edge of transforming society. Invite the congregation or group to discuss how inclusive they really are. Is there real ethnic diversity represented in their parish and church structures? Are prominent roles

within the parish and church open to those from diverse ethnic backgrounds?
How can the church show a clear commitment to inclusion?

What specific action, however simple, can your parish and church take to help transform society? Questions to reflect on include:

- How can we reach out beyond our level of comfort to meet and learn about others, hear their stories and be open to their full humanity?
- What kind of projects can we identify that bring together different individuals, schools, parishes, small groups and/or communities to work together on an issue?
- What questions can we begin to ask and how can we examine the policies of our local, national and international community to make sure they do not discriminate against ethnic minorities and others, that have not enjoyed full citizenship in some way?
- How can we bring diversity and respect for others into our prayers, our worship celebrations and our holy days and holidays?
- How can we provide a safe and hospitable space for those facing racist discrimination?
- How can we provide suitable training and up-skilling to ensure those who believe they have a calling to perform various roles in the church can do so?
- Can we have church materials and even Bibles in other languages as a way of welcoming those with different languages and cultures?
- Can we allow Christians the freedom to pray or read in mother tongue languages?
- Can we display the different national and ethnic flags of those who attend the church?

Action: Discuss and agree on something you can do together. Write up a plan with roles, responsibilities and a timetable. Display it on a noticeboard, and put it into action.

e. Make a pledge

In the first section of his speech, Dr King spoke about a 'promissory note', arguing that the American Constitution and the Declaration of Independence was a note that promised all men (and women) the guaranteed unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He described the failure to give people of colour these rights as akin to a rich person giving his poorer peer a cheque that will bounce, or a bank note of little value.

Much like a cheque, most bank notes come with a written pledge or promise to the bearer. Dr King was urging Americans to rededicate themselves to that initial promise or pledge:

‘...we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead... Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.’

Prepare pieces of paper about the size of a £20 note with ‘I promise to...’ written or printed at the top. Give everyone a piece of paper and a pen or felt tip. Ask them to make a commitment to something connected with freedom, peace and justice and to write or draw it on their paper. The pledge could be as simple as looking out for someone who is picked on at school, or bullied at work or promising to support an organisation working to end forms of modern day slavery, such as people trafficking or debt bondage. It may involve pledging to do some voluntary work, for example with disadvantaged communities, or for justice as a magistrate, or with children as a school governor.

Invite everyone to hold up their pledges as this prayer is said:
Gracious God

We lift up these pieces of paper as symbols of our commitment
to making your world a better place

We thank you that over the centuries, you have raised up men and women of faith
who have fought courageously for freedom, truth and justice

We ask that we may be inspired by their example, and seek to act justly and to
love mercy and to walk humbly with our God
Amen.



8. Take further action



Dr King believed that Christians should be involved in civic engagement to create a more just society. He encouraged those who did not vote to register, and cajoled others to join social reform organisations. He believed that action should take place locally, as well as regionally and nationally.

Consider contemporary ways to fulfil Dr King's mandate, for example, through joining national Christian and secular campaigning organisations for racial and social justice for example:

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

Works against poverty and injustice in developing countries

www.cafod.org.uk

Catholic Association for Racial Justice

Tackles racial discrimination within the Church and society

www.carj.org.uk

Catholic Worker Movement

Working for justice and charity and against racism

catholicworker.org

Common Wealth

Christians for Economic and Social Justice

commonwealthnetwork2010.blogspot.co.uk

Church Action on Poverty

A national ecumenical Christian social justice charity, committed to tackling poverty
church-poverty.org.uk

CITIZENS UK

An alliance of civil society organisations working to transform their communities
citizensuk.org

Fellowship of Reconciliation

Working on personal, social, political and economic transformation for justice
for.org.uk

Jesuit Refugee Service

Serves, accompanies and advocates for refugees and other forced migrants
jrsuk.net

National Justice and Peace Network

Works for justice and peace by connecting social justice groups and individuals
justice-and-peace.org.uk

Pax Christi

This 'Peace of Christ' organisation helps the Church and society promote peace
paxchristi.org.uk

Runnymede Trust

A race equality think tank providing research, networks and policy debate
runnymedetrust.org

SPEAK

A network connecting young adults to campaign about issues of global injustice
speak.org.uk

Stephen Lawrence Trust

Working to overcome racial disadvantage and discrimination through education
stephenlawrence.org.uk

Young Christian workers

To empower young people to be a positive change in their lives and communities
ycwimpact.com

9. Feedback form

The purpose of the feedback is to assist us in developing materials for Racial Justice Sunday in 2014.

We would greatly appreciate and value your comments on how useful these materials have been.

What in the materials have you found most helpful?

What in the materials have you found least helpful?

What would you suggest as a theme for Racial Justice Sunday 2014?

Please return your comments to:
Racial Justice Sunday 2013
CARJ, 9 Henry Road, London N4 2LH

For information about our activities and available resources, Please visit our website www.carj.org.uk Email: info@carj.org.uk

One Race the Human Race

Thank you.

10. Order form

For additional RJS Packs

Please note that we normally send a 1 RJS pack to every parish, however if you would like additional packs please complete this form and return it to us. RJS Packs can also be downloaded on-line at www.carj.org.uk

Title _____ Initials _____ Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____ Email _____

Parish/Organisation _____

Diocese _____

Quantity	Items	Donation
	Racial Justice Sunday Pack (includes bible reflection, suggested homily, prayers and hymns, activities for children & young people, A4 poster, feedback form)	
	Additional Posters A4 or A3 (please specify)	

Materials are free of charge however if you would like to send a donation, please send a cheque payable to CARJ.

Please return this form to
Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ)
9 Henry Road, London N4 2LH

Email: info@carj.org.uk

Tel: 020 8802 8080

Fax: 020 8211 0808

Registered charity number 291601. RJS materials are published by CARJ in partnership with the Churches Racial Justice Network, CTBI.

Acknowledgements

With sincere thanks for all contributions and permissions.

This booklet has been produced by the Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ) using materials from the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) Racial Justice Sunday 2013 materials and with additional material supplied by CARJ. With thanks to the CTBI contributor Richard Reddie and the CARJ contributors Rosie Bairwal and Father Phil Sumner.

Page 1 (front cover), photo credit: Bettman/Corbis

Pages 4-5, Introduction using material from Pope John Paul II to the UN Special Committee against Apartheid, July 7, 1984, Brothers and Sisters to Us, U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Racism in Our Day, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, January 1979 and Sisters of Mercy, Prayer Service on the Elimination of Racism, US, 2008

Page 6, Background uses material from US Census Bureau 2012 data on Poverty, Income and Health. Photo credit: Bettman/Corbis

Page 7. Button belonging to Charles Mann who went to the March on Washington 1963 the summer before 8th grade. Photo credit: Corbis

Page 8, photo credits: US National Archives and Records Administration, US Library of Congress

Page 9, photo credit: Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust

Page 10, uses material from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Oxford University, National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers and The Guardian

Page 11, photo credits: Dreamstime

Pages 12-13, Bible verses are based on Catholic Devotional Bible, New Revised Standard Version, 2000. Photo credit: Dreamstime

Page 14, Homily suggestion 1 by Father Phil Sumner. Photo credits: Dreamstime

Page 16, Homily suggestion 2 by Richard Reddie

Page 18, Hymn Go Forth and Tell by J. E. Seddon © Mrs M. Seddon/Jubilate Hymns. Laudate, Decani Music 2012

Page 19, Prayers including material from Sisters of Mercy, US, Education for Justice, 2008-13

Pages 22-5, Activities includes material from Sisters of Mercy, Prayer Service on the Elimination of Racism, US, 2008. Photo credits: Dreamstime

Page 26, photo credits: Dreamstime

Page 32 (back cover), photo credits: Corbis

Catholic Association for Racial Justice

CARJ tackles racial discrimination within the Church and within society. We work to ensure that racial inequality and the racism that causes it are eradicated. We do this through programmes like:

Racial Justice Sunday – raising awareness of the issues.

Training parish and diocesan groups on racial justice issues

Outreach to ethnic minority communities, including Gypsies and Travellers

Countering Political Extremism working with other Church denominations

Supporting Black and Minority Ethnic **students reach their potential**

March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, 28 August, 1963



To join CARJ or to make a contribution to the future work of CARJ:
contact CARJ, 9 Henry Road, London N4 2LH
020 8802 8080 info@carj.org.uk www.carj.org.uk
Cheques payable to CARJ or the Catholic Association for Racial Justice.
CARJ is a registered charity no. 291601

