

REVIEW OF LIFE ON RACISM

The issue of racism has been dominating much of the national and international debate and news coverage in recent times, following the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in America. Much of the response has been led by the “Black Lives Matter” movement, including organising protests and marches.

One particular incident was the pulling down of a statue of Edward Colston. Colston was a merchant who used his wealth to provide financial support to local charitable causes and services. However, much of this wealth was the result of his role in the slave trade, which saw 84,000 slaves transported to America with approximately 18,000 of them dying en route.

SEE

- What you think “racism” means? Can you describe any examples from history or recent times where racism has occurred?
- Have you, or anyone you know, ever experienced hostility or discrimination because of the colour of your/their skin? If so, how did it happen and how did you react? How did it make you feel?
- Have you or any of your friends been involved in the “Black Lives Matter” protests and demonstrations? If so, what was it like and what were your reasons for joining in?

JUDGE

- Why do you think the movement is called “Black Lives Matter”?
- Why do you think there were such big protests about the killing of George Floyd by a police officer?
- Should the statues of people who supported slavery be taken down?

Consider the words of Pope Francis:

“We cannot close our eyes to any form of racism or exclusion, while pretending to defend the sacredness of every human life.” and the message of the Second Vatican Council:

“Any kind of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God’s design. (“The Church in the Modern World”, Vatican II, n.29)

- What is special about God’s design of the human person?
- How should we behave towards people who are different from us in some way? For example: colour, beliefs, gender, language, nationality?

ACT

- How can we put into practice Pope Francis words?
- How can we stand up for equality among all people?
- Do we need to change our attitudes in anyway?
- What can we do to listen more to those who are victims of racism?