



FAITH JUSTICE

Becoming Antiracist July 2021: *Freedom*

"To increase your capacity to fight your own complicity in racism, you can start by increasing your awareness of the issues and the people involved. One particular place to start is by reading and learning more about the racial history of the United States. History is about context. So, studying history remains vital. It teaches us how to place people, events and movements within the broader scope of God's work in the world." – from *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism*, by Jimar Tisby, pg. 194

Scripture: Micah 6:8 "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

History Reference: "When colonists in North America fought and won the war for independence from Britain, they used the rhetoric of liberty and natural rights to argue for the righteousness of their cause. While white soldiers and political leaders were declaring their inalienable rights to independence, they were also enslaving countless women, men, and children of African descent. And the American church participated in and defended the contradiction between freedom and slavery embedded in the constitution of its young nation. Revisiting early American history reveals the shocking forms of hypocrisy that helped shape our society..."

The antislavery clause was excised from the final draft of the Declaration of Independence due to the objections of delegates from Georgia and South Carolina as well as some northern states that benefited from slavery... The authors of the Declaration of Independence appealed to the idea of universal human liberty passed down from an all-powerful deity. But the 'universal' rights referenced in the Declaration of Independence were not universally applied." – *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism*, by Jimar Tisby, pg.41-43.

Further reading: On July 5, 1852, 3.5 million African Americans were enslaved—roughly 14% of the total population of the United States. Frederick Douglass was asked to deliver a keynote address at the Independence Day celebration. In his now famous speech, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July," Douglass offered one of the most thought-provoking and powerful testaments to the inhumanity of slavery ever given. (Link to article with the full speech: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/frederick-douglass>)

Becoming an Antiracist Multicultural Organization:

www.aesa.us/conferences/2013_ac_presentations/Continuum_AntiRacist.pdf

Quote: Mary McLeod Bethune (1875-1955) Born to former slaves, Mary devoted her life to ensure the right to education and freedom from discrimination for African Americans. From her speech "What Does American Democracy mean to Me?" "We have always been loyal when the ideals of American democracy have been attacked. We have given our blood in its defense...we have fought for the democratic principles of equality under the law... we have fought to preserve one nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition all men are created equal...we have fought for America with all her imperfections, not so much for what she is, but for what we knew she can be."

Reflection question: *What does our faith as Christians tell us about our part to do the work to support freedom for all people in all areas of our earthly life, in economics, education, legal institutions, and in healthcare for all people?*

Compiled by the Anti-Racism Committee. Questions? Comments? Email antiracismbulletin@stjosephparish.org

Racial Justice Book Group

July 14th, 7pm on Zoom

Please join us for the Racial Justice Book Group Zoom meeting Wednesday, July 14 at 7:00pm. We will discuss *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James H. Cone. Contact racialjusticebookgroup@stjosephparish.org to receive the Zoom link.