






February 2012

ChristTheKingDetroit.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH</p>			1 8:30am Mass With School 7pm Choir RCIA	2 6:15 Mass	3 8:30am Mass	4 <i>Women's Prayer Breakfast</i>
5 8:50 Religious Ed. 9am St. Vincent dePaul 10am Mass Adult Faith	6 <i>7pm MOSES</i>	7 8:30am Mass 10:30 Scripture Ministry Formation Paschal Mystery	8 8:30am Mass 7pm Choir RCIA	9 6:15 Mass Worship Evangelization Christian Service	10 8:30am Mass	11 10am Liturgy Planning <i>NSO House Warming Spaghetti Dinner</i>
12 10am Mass  Anniversary Blessing 3-5pm Vicariate Confirmation Class	13	14 8:30am Mass 10:30 Scripture  Poetry Night	15 8:30am Mass 7pm Choir RCIA	16  6:15 Mass	17 8:30am Mass 6pm Village Builders at St. Christopher/ St. Paul "My Special Love"	18 11am Altar Servers <i>Loyola High Invites you to Mardi Gras Koelzer Hall</i>
19 8:50 Religious Ed. 10am Mass	20	21 8:30am Mass 10:30 Scripture	22 8:30am Mass With School 12 Noon Prayer & Ashes 7pm Mass 7pm RCIA Choir	23 6:15 Mass Parish Council	24 8:30am Mass <i>7pm Stations Mass: A Guided Tour— Chapter 2 Holy Thursday</i>	25 
26 10am Mass	27 <i>6:00pm 1st Communion class</i>	28 8:30am Mass 10:30 Scripture	29 8:30am Mass 7pm Choir RCI			

Crossing the Red Sea

At the Encounter we spent Saturday doing an exercise called “The Red Sea.” Actually, John the Baptist was doing a Red Sea experience. The **Jordan River** is like the Red Sea. John was challenging the people to step into the river, let go of their old sinful, selfish, slavery self; and come up, free persons, on the other side, into the Promised Land. “Change your Heart!” was his call.

Any church that takes the Gospel to people of another culture must ask questions about prevailing attitudes that each culture has regarding the others: who has the cultural dominance, power and so on. In the United States we have a history of slavery, Jim Crow, and white dominance.

It is clearly necessary to examine attitudes, social and psychological dynamics and power structures in a church that has a white European-American heritage working in a minority neighborhood. Crossing the Red Sea or the Jordan River is one way to examine our assumptions and attitudes. We cannot do much about the world-wide Catholic Church, but we do have some control over our local parish, and the structures within it: pastoral staff, parish council & commissions, and people in the pews.

There are Ground Rules; actually a “Covenant” – No one is a beginner. Everyone is somewhere on the path of learning. Each person is to be respected in his or her own space. Participate. Each has something to teach, and something to learn. Listen carefully to one another. Deal with conflict.

In our society, *racism* is a huge issue. It can infect all of our social interactions – even in church! Racism is (a) race prejudice + (b) sanctioned misuse of power in relationships and social institutions. Both aspects are necessary. Prejudice by itself is simple bigotry or ignorance; power can be misused in many different contexts that might have nothing to do with race.

The Journey through the Red Sea, or across the Jordan River, goes through several stages:

- 1 Intentional Segregation
- 2 Passive “club” with some tolerance or others
- 3 Multicultural Symbolic Change
- 4 Identity Change into an “anti-racist” structure
- 5 Transforming Structural Change
- 6 Fully transformed, working to transform society.

We broke into small groups to ask the question: **Where do you think Christ the King is?** Two tables felt we are at **3**, four groups thought we were at **3.5** (not quite #4 but trying to get there), and one table considered us at a solid **4**. The descriptions of Stage 3 and Stage 4 are listed in the next column.

We took three passes as this discussion. It was animated; not everyone at any table fully agreed with the others.

There were two reasons for this:

- 1 When you ask “Is our parish...?” there is no one answer, because there are several different levels of social structure and decision-making in a parish.
- 2 We have a wide diversity of persons in our parish. Some of the whites were raised in families where racial prejudice was discussed and consciously rejected; but others have come to these questions more recently.

There is also a great variety of experiences and opinions among the African Americans in the parish.

Moreover, we have People of Color who are not African Americans.

3 Symbolic Change		4 Identity Change
Makes official policy about multicultural diversity.	Red Sea	Growing understanding of racism as barrier to effective diversity.
Sees itself as “non-racist” institution with open doors to People of Color.		Develops analysis of systemic racism.
Carries out intentional inclusive efforts, recruiting “someone of Color” on committees or office staff.	Jordan River	Sponsor programs of anti-racism training.
Expanding view of diversity includes other socially oppressed groups; eg women, disabled, elderly, gay & lesbian, Third World citizens, etc.		New consciousness of institutionalized white power and privilege.
But...		Develops intentional identity as an “anti-racist” institution.
“Not those who make waves.”		Begins to develop accountability to racially oppressed communities.
Little or no change in culture, policies, decision-making.		Increasing commitment to dismantle racism and eliminate inherent white advantage.
Unaware of continuing patterns of privilege, paternalism & control.		But...
		Institutional structures and culture that maintain white power and privilege still intact and relatively untouched.

I hope **every group or committee will** take time at their next meeting to do the Red Sea exercise. Some-one in your group was most likely at the Encounter; if not, there are many parishioners who will help you. They have the descriptions of all six stages. I think each group, and **each person** has to discern where they are in the Jordan River. John the Baptist, and Jesus after him, is always calling us to **“CHANGE YOUR HEART!”**

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