

Prairie Fire News

Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity, O.F.S.

Established 1994

Volume 2; Issue 11



Justice



Peace



Integrity of Creation



editor: Dennis R. Dowell, O.F.S.

Race in America

Statistics from Social Justice Resource Center

Despite our stated idealism, that “*all men are created equal*,” America’s actions regarding race have not always been consistent with its values, and the struggle continues. According to the FBI, in 2018 hate groups reached a record high of **1020**—a **30%** increase over the previous **3** years. Here are some of the statistics that illustrate a few of the disparities in our culture:

Overall Population

- White—**76%**
- Hispanic—**18%**
- Black—**13%**

—US Census Bureau

Median Household Income

- White—**\$67,865**
- Hispanic—**\$46,882**
- American Indian—**\$39,719**
- Black—**\$30,555**

—US Census Bureau

Health Insurance Coverage

- **84%** of Hispanics
- **89%** of Blacks
- **92%** of Asians
- **94%** of Whites

—US Census Bureau

Wealth

African-Americans have a median wealth of **\$13, 460**
Whites have a median wealth of **\$142,180**

—Forbes

Life Expectancy

White population—**78.8 years**
Black population—**75.3 years**

—Center for Disease Control

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COMING REGIONAL EVENTS

March 28—20, 2020

Regional Fraternity & Executive Councils

August 1, 2020

Regional day of Reflection—Formation

August 28—20, 2020

Regional Retreat
Regional Fraternity & Executive Councils

NATIONAL EVENTS

August 18—22, 2021

OFS-USA Quinquennial Congress
(Phoenix, Arizona)

Race in America continued

Infant Mortality Rate

Black babies are more that **twice** as likely to dies as white babies.

—Washington Post

Drug Charges

Despite similar rates of illicit drug use, black people are **13** times more likely than white people to be jailed on drug charges.

—Washington Post

Incarceration

- African-Americans constitute **34%** of incarcerated individuals
- African-Americans are incarcerated at more than **5** times the rate of white people
- The imprisonment rate for African-American women is **twice** that of white women
- Nationwide, African-American children represent **32%** of children who are arrested, **42%** of children who are detained, and **52%** of cases that are waived to criminal court

—NAACP

Voting

One in **13** African-Americans of voting age is disenfranchised, a rate more than **4** times greater than that of non-African-Americans. Over **7.4%** of the adult African-American population is disenfranchised compared to **1.8%** of the non-African-American population.

—Sentencing Project

Unsolved Crime Victims

In the past **10** years, nearly **26,000** murders have gone unsolved in major American cities. Of those, **75%** were black.

—Washington Post

Capital Punishment

As of 2014, 42% of those on death row in the Unites States were black.

Of the executions that have occurred since 1976:

- 55% were black
- 34% were white
- 8% were Latino

The ultimate test of your greatness is the way you treat every human being...
 ~ St. John Paul II

From Daily Ray of Hope—Sierra Club

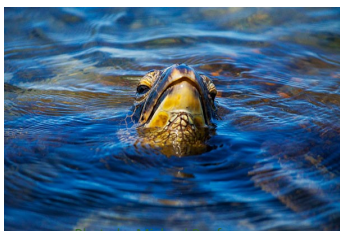


Photo by Michael Kemrow
Green sea turtle in Kalaoa, Hawaii

*And if it's bad
 Don't let it get you down, you can take it
 And if it hurts
 Don't let them see you cry, you can make it*

*Hold your head up, oh, hold your head up, oh
 Hold your head up, oh hold your head high*

~ C. White and R. Argent

Word for the Day—from *Gratefulness.org*

Prayer is sitting in silence until it silences us, choosing gratitude until we are grateful.

—Richard Rohr

Race in America continued

When the defendant was white and the victim was black, **21** people were executed, but when the defendant was black and the victim was white, **290** people were executed.

—Death Penalty Info.org

According to a recent Pew Research Center study, **38%** of Latinos reported that they had experienced harassment and prejudice because of their background in the past year. These included

- Discrimination and unfair treatment—**24%**
- Criticized for speaking Spanish in public—**22%**
- Told to go back to their home country—**20%**
- Called offensive names—**16%**

For more on **Racism**, [click here](#).

USCCB Launches Civility initiative



Civility: it's likely the most important tenet needed in the political sphere, and in everyday life. It's also likely the least heeded. In the era of modern politics, harsh words and actions are seen more often than kindness and respect. In response to this, ahead of the 2020 election the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops are launching a year-long initiative that invites Catholics to model civility, love for neighbor, and respectful dialogue. **Civilize It: Dignity Beyond the Debate** will ask Catholics to pledge, civility, clarity, and compassion in their families, communities, parishes, and call on others to do the same.

[Read more about this initiative](#) that was launched by the USCCB on November 1 to learn more about how you can follow along and incorporate civility into your daily action.

If you would like to make the pledge yourself, you can do so at

<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/civilize-it>.

In the Catholic sense, civility is more than mere politeness or the absence of discourtesy; it is seeing and responding to the God-given dignity of another as a fellow creation of God. As Franciscans, what better step can we take toward peace than the practice of civility?

—taken from USCCB & MCC

From *This Nonviolent life—Daily Inspiration for your non-violent journey*

~Pace e Bene Nonviolent Service

"Because we all share this small planet earth, we have to learn to live in harmony and peace with each other and with nature. That is not just a dream, but a necessity. We are dependent on each other in so many ways that we can no longer live in isolated communities and ignore what is happening outside those communities."

—The Dalai Lama, The Nobel Peace Prize Lecture

Laudato Si In Spoken Word

Created by Greycomm Studios of Loyola University Maryland [this poem video](#) is a multimedia representation of Pope Francis' teaching on the environment in his 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*. It conveys the essence of the Pope's letter, which was written for the Church and for the world. A discussion guide is also available. The project received help from the Covenant, Greenfaith, and the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

[Catholic Climate Covenant]

The Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents. In these brief reflections, we highlight several of the key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition.

1. Life and Dignity of the Human Person

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and euthanasia. The value of human life is being threatened by cloning, embryonic stem cell research, and the use of the death penalty. The intentional targeting of civilians in war or terrorist attacks is always wrong. Catholic teaching also calls on us to work to avoid war. Nations must protect the right to life by finding increasingly effective ways to prevent conflicts and resolve them by peaceful means. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

Daily Catholic Wisdom

—Edward Sri

This is the tragedy of the modern notion of freedom. When I train myself in the name of my personal freedom to pursue what I want, when I want, how I want, as often as I want, I am not actually free. I'm a slave. I become a slave to my interests. . . In the end, the modern notion of freedom trains us to become slaves to our own selfishness.