

Racial Healing & *The Rule of St. Benedict*: Agenda for April 10, 2022

12:30pm (5 mins)	Welcome (Sr. Anna-Camille) Review Agenda, Intro Session (Marilyn)
12:35pm (10 mins)	Light candles, Opening Prayer (Brian and Anna) Large Group Sharing/Report from Wednesday Group Meeting (Sr. Anna-Camille) Looking Ahead to Our May Session (Brian and Anna) Please Mute Your Microphones and Stay on Zoom During Break.
12:45 (10 mins)	Reading of "A Call for Unity" (Racial Healing and The Rule of Benedict Team)
	Bonnie Transitions to <i>The Rule of St Benedict</i> Teachings
12:55 pm (75 mins)	Marilyn Intro Large Group Video and Discussion: "A Reading of the Letter from Birmingham Jail" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cT397uOak (Sr. Raphaela)
2:10 pm (5 mins)	BREAK: Please Stay on Zoom
2:15 pm (20 mins)	Small Group Lectio Divina
2:35 pm (10 mins)	Return to RSB Teachings and Personal Reflection (Sr. Anna-Camille) Closing Prayer and Extinguish Candle (Brian and Anna)
2:45 pm (15 mins)	Oblate Assignments (Sr. Anna-Camille) Announcements (Sr. Anna-Camille) Survey Vote for Proposals for Next Year (Sr. Raphaela)
3:00pm	Session Ends (Sr. Anna-Camille)

Reminder of Assignments We Completed for This April Session

The True Theology of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*: Half of chapter 6 (p. 155-189)
- Myths about Civil Rights, Myths 3 and 4

Welcome & Opening Prayer
(10 minutes)
(Brian and Anna light candle and lead prayer)

Opening Prayer

- Reader 1: O persistent God,
 deliver us from assuming your mercy is gentle.
 Pressure us that we may grow more human,
 not through the lessening of our struggles
 but through an expansion of them
 that will undamn us
 and unbury our gifts.
- Reader 2: Deepen our hurt
 until we learn to share it
 and ourselves
 openly,
 and our needs honestly.
 Sharpen our fears
 until we name them
 and release the power we have locked in them
 and they in us.
- Reader 3: Accentuate our confusion
 until we shed those grandiose expectations
 that divert us from the small, glad gifts
 of the now and the here and the me.
 Expose our shame where it shivers,
 crouched behind the curtains of propriety,
 until we can laugh at last
 through our common frailties and failures,
 laugh our way toward becoming whole.
- Reader 4: Deliver us
 from just going through the motions
 and wasting everything we have
 which is today,
 a chance,
 a choice,
 my creativity,
 your call.

Note: *Racial Healing & The Rule of St Benedict* is adapted from JustFaith Ministries *Faith and Racial Healing: Embracing Truth, Justice and Restoration*

Reader 1: O persistent God,
 let how much it all matters
 pry me off dead center
 so if I am moved inside
 to tears
 or sighs
 or screams
 or smiles
 or dreams,

 they will be real
 and I will be in touch with who I am
 and who you are
 and who my sisters and brothers are.
 Amen.

Ted Loder
“Pry Me Off Dead Center”
Guerrillas of Grace: Prayers for the Battle
Augsburg Books, 1981

A Call to Unity

(10 minutes)

PUBLIC STATEMENT BY EIGHT ALABAMA CLERGYMEN

April 12, 1963 [Good Friday]

(Marilyn) We the undersigned clergymen are among those who, in January, issued "An Appeal for Law and Order and Common Sense," in dealing with racial problems in Alabama. We expressed understanding that honest convictions in racial matters could properly be pursued in the courts, but urged that decisions of those courts should in the meantime be peacefully obeyed.

(Susan) Since that time there had been some evidence of increased forbearance and a willingness to face facts. Responsible citizens have undertaken to work on various problems which cause racial friction and unrest. In Birmingham, recent public events have given indication that we all have opportunity for a new constructive and realistic approach to racial problems.

(Anna) However, we are now confronted by a series of demonstrations by some of our Negro citizens, directed and led in part by outsiders. We recognize the natural impatience of people who feel that their hopes are slow in being realized. But we are convinced that these demonstrations are unwise and untimely.

(Sr. Anna-Camille) We agree rather with certain local Negro leadership which has called for honest and open negotiation of racial issues in our area. And we believe this kind of facing of issues can best be accomplished by citizens of our own metropolitan area, white and Negro, meeting with their knowledge and experience of the local situation. All of us need to face that responsibility and find proper channels for its accomplishment.

(Brian) Just as we formerly pointed out that "hatred and violence have no sanction in our religious and political traditions," we also point out that such actions as incite to hatred and violence, however technically peaceful those actions may be, have not contributed to the resolution of our local problems. We do not believe that these days of new hope are days when extreme measures are justified in Birmingham.

(Susan) We commend the community as a whole, and the local news media and law enforcement in particular, on the calm manner in which these demonstrations have been handled. We urge the public to continue to show restraint should the demonstrations continue, and the law enforcement official to remain calm and continue to protect our city from violence.

(Bonnie) We further strongly urge our own Negro community to withdraw support from these demonstrations, and to unite locally in working peacefully for a better Birmingham. When rights are consistently denied, a cause should be pressed in the courts and in negotiations among local leaders, and not in the streets. We appeal to both our white and Negro citizenry to observe the principles of law and order and common sense.

C. C. J. Carpenter, D.D., LL.D.

[Episcopal] Bishop of Alabama

Joseph A. Durick, D.D.

[Roman Catholic] Auxiliary Bishop, Diocese of Mobile, Birmingham

Rabbi Hilton L. Grafman

[Reformed] Temple Emanu-El, Birmingham, Alabama

Bishop Paul Hardin

[Methodist] Bishop of the Alabama-West Florida Conference

Bishop Nolan B. Harmon

Bishop of the North Alabama Conference of the Methodist Church

George M. Murray, D.D., LL.D.

Bishop Coadjutor, Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

Edward V. Ramage

Moderator, Synod of the Alabama Presbyterian Church in the United States

Earl Stallings Pastor,

First Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama

The Rule of Saint Benedict (RSB) Teachings

Drawn by Bonnie Westmark from
The Rule of Saint Benedict

“Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may he bring us all together to everlasting life.” {RB 72:12}

“Who will dwell in your tent, Lord; who will find rest upon your holy mountain? {Ps. 14[15]:1} {RB Pro:23} “One who has not wronged a fellowman in any way.” {Ps 14[15]:2-3} {RB Pro:26}

“Show equal love to everyone.” {RB 2:22}

Video and Discussion:
A Reading of
“Letter from Birmingham Jail”
(75 minutes)

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__cT397uOak

Note: If you want a print version, you can access Dr. King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail” through this link:

https://www.csuchico.edu/iege/_assets/documents/susi-letter-from-birmingham-jail.pdf

PLEASE STAY ON ZOOM DURING THE BREAK.

Lectio Divina (20 minutes)

“I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.”

Martin Luther King's Acceptance Speech, on the occasion of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, December 10, 1964

Lectio Process

Prepare:

- Take a moment to come fully into the present.
- Sit comfortably alert, eyes closed, and center yourself with breathing.
- Invite yourself to be present to the Spirit.

Facilitator may ask for volunteer readers for each movement:

1. Lectio: Read/hear the Word. First reading (read twice). Listen for the word or phrase that attracts you from the passage. Repeat it over to yourself softly during a one minute silence. When the leader gives the signal, each person in the group, in turn, may **say aloud that word or phrase (no elaboration)** or they may pass.

2. Meditatio: Consider, “How is my life touched?” (by this/these words) Second reading. Listen to discover how your life is touched today by this passage. Consider possibilities or receive a sensory impression or image during the two minutes of silence. When the leader gives the signal, **speak a sentence or two beginning with “I hear, I see, or I sense” or you may pass.**

3. Oratio: Ask, “Is there an invitation here?” (for you) Third reading. Listen to discover a possible invitation relevant for this month. Ponder it for two minutes in silence. When the leader gives the signal, **share briefly with your group or you may pass.**

4. Contemplatio: Rest in prayer. Pray aloud, or silently for God to help the person on your right respond to their invitation. After each spoken or silent prayer, the one who prays says “Amen” followed by a group “Amen”

The Rule of Saint Benedict (RSB) Teachings

Drawn by Bonnie Westmark from

The Rule of Saint Benedict

Reflection: Sister Anna-Camille

(5 minutes)

“Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may he bring us all together to everlasting life.” {RB 72:12}

“Who will dwell in your tent, Lord; who will find rest upon your holy mountain? {Ps.14[15]:1} {RB Pro:23} “One who has not wronged a fellowman in any way.” {Ps14[15]:2-3} {RB Pro:26}

“Show equal love to everyone.” {RB 2:22}

Closing Prayer

Brian and Anna
(10 Minutes)

O God of fire and freedom,
deliver us from our bondage
 to what can be counted
and go with us in a new exodus
 toward what counts,
but can only be measured
 in bread shared
 and swords becom[ing] plowshares;
 in bodies healed
 and minds liberated;
 in songs sung
 and justice done;
 in laughter in the night
 and joy in the morning;
 in love through all seasons
 and great gladness of heart;
 in all people coming together
 and a kingdom coming in glory;
 in your name being praised
 and our becoming an alleluia,
through Jesus the Christ.

Ted Loder
“Go with Me in a New Exodus”
Guerrillas of Grace: Prayers for the Battle
Augsburg Books, 1981

Assignments for May 15, 2022, Oblate Session

Seeking Restoration

- *Color of Compromise*: Chapter 11, Conclusion
- *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*: Second Half of Chapter 6 and Epilogue (p. 189-221)
- Myths about Civil Rights, Myth 5 (Participant Packet)
- Read “Guidelines for Being Strong White Allies” (Participant Packet) and “26 Ways to Be in the Struggle”:
https://issuu.com/nlc.sf.2014/docs/beyondthestreets_final

Myths about the Civil Rights Movement (Myth 5 of 5)

Myth #5: Black Power was a violent uprising that opposed the principles of civil rights

Read:

- “What is the Black Power Movement?": <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-black-power-4154338>
- Black Panther 10 Point Program: <http://blackpower.web.unc.edu/2017/04/the-black-panthers-10-point-program>

Reflect:

- Many leaders within the Black Power Movement had been deeply involved with the nonviolence movement. Why do you think that some leaders shifted their strategies?
- What are some common objectives of the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement?



Guidelines for Being Strong White Allies

Adapted from *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Social Justice*

by **Paul Kivel**

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVE SUPPORT does a strong white ally provide to a person of color? Over the years, people of color that I have talked with have been remarkably consistent in describing the kinds of support they need from white allies.

What People of Color Want from White Allies

“Respect us”	“Listen to us”
“Find out about us”	“Don’t make assumptions”
“Don’t take over”	“Stand by my side”
“Provide information”	“Don’t assume you know what’s best for me”
“Resources”	“Money”
“Take risks”	“Make mistakes”
“Don’t take it personally”	“Honesty”
“Understanding”	“Talk to other white people”
“Teach your children about racism”	“Interrupt jokes and comments”
“Speak up”	“Don’t ask me to speak for my people”
“Your body on the line”	“Persevere daily”

Basic Tactics

Every situation is different and calls for critical thinking about how to make a difference. Taking the statements above into account, I have compiled some general guidelines.

1. **Assume racism is everywhere, every day.** Just as economics influences everything we do, just as gender and gender politics influence everything we do, assume that racism is affecting

your daily life. We assume this because it's true, and because a privilege of being white is the freedom to not deal with racism all the time. We have to learn to see the effect that racism has. Notice who speaks, what is said, how things are done and described. Notice who isn't present when racist talk occurs. Notice code words for race, and the implications of the policies, patterns, and comments that are being expressed. You already notice the skin color of everyone you meet—now notice what difference it makes.

2. **Notice who is the center of attention and who is the center of power.** Racism works by directing violence and blame toward people of color and consolidating power and privilege for white people.
3. **Notice how racism is denied, minimized, and justified.**
4. **Understand and learn from the history of whiteness and racism.** Notice how racism has changed over time and how it has subverted or resisted challenges. Study the tactics that have worked effectively against it.
5. **Understand the connections between racism, economic issues, sexism, and other forms of injustice.**
6. **Take a stand against injustice.** Take risks. It is scary, difficult, and may bring up feelings of inadequacy, lack of self-confidence, indecision, or fear of making mistakes, but ultimately it is the only healthy and moral human thing to do. Intervene in situations where racism is being passed on.
7. **Be strategic.** Decide what is important to challenge and what's not. Think about strategy in particular situations. Attack the source of power.
8. **Don't confuse a battle with the war.** Behind particular incidents and interactions are larger patterns. Racism is flexible and adaptable. There will be gains and losses in the struggle for justice and equality.
9. **Don't call names or be personally abusive.** Since power is often defined as power over others—the ability to abuse or control people—it is easy to become abusive ourselves. However, we usually end up abusing people who have less power than we do because it is less dangerous. Attacking people doesn't address the systemic nature of racism and inequality.
10. **Support the leadership of people of color.** Do this consistently, but not uncritically.
11. **Learn something about the history of white people who have worked for racial justice.** There is a long history of

white people who have fought for racial justice. Their stories can inspire and sustain you.

12. **Don't do it alone.** You will not end racism by yourself. We can do it if we work together. Build support, establish networks, and work with already established groups.

13. **Talk with your children and other young people about racism.**

Please send comments, feedback, resources, and suggestions for distribution to paul@paulkivel.com. Further resources are available at www.paulkivel.com.

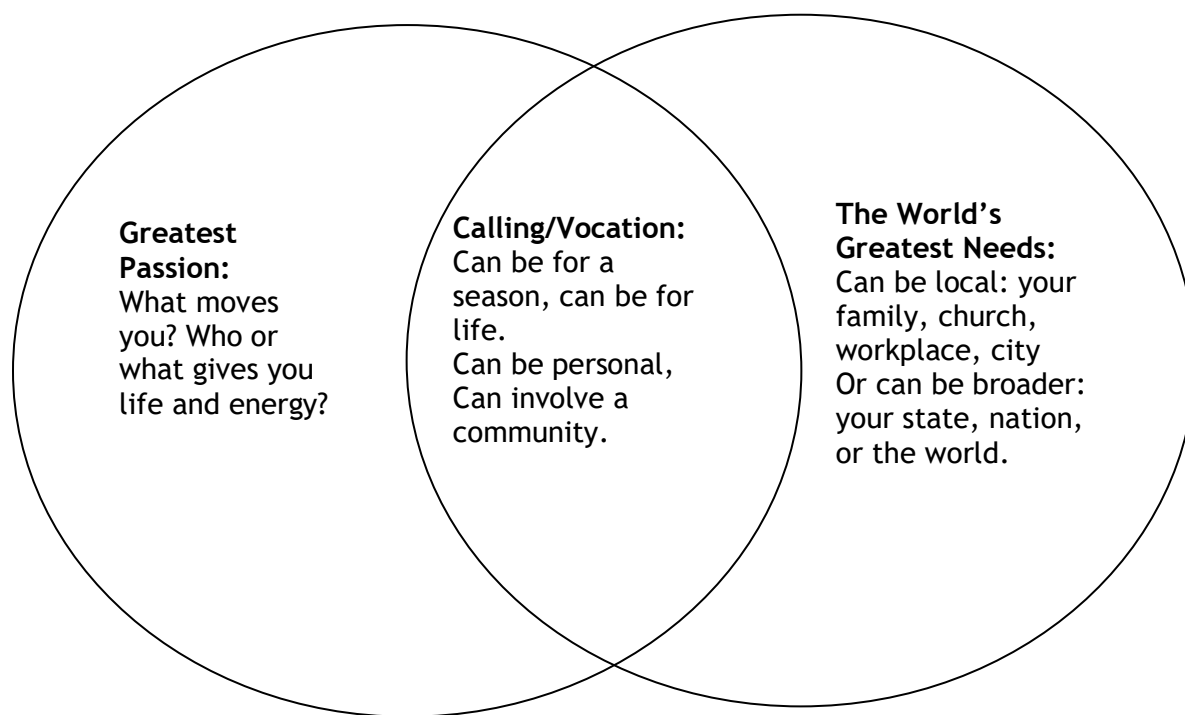
Looking Ahead to Our May Oblate Meeting

We will work with these two documents (“A Call to ACTION” and “Start, Stop, Continue”) during the May meeting.

This is NOT an assignment to prepare for the May Oblate Meeting

A Call to ACTION

“Vocation is where our greatest passion meets the world’s greatest need.” – Frederick Buechner



Start, Stop, Continue

Look at “Start, Stop, Continue.”

1. **START:** In the first column, write your responses to the following question: In response to what you have learned during our JustFaith journey, what will you **START** doing? (For example, someone might *start* a conversation with their pastor/priest about addressing racism in their church. Or someone might *start* volunteering at an agency that works for racial justice).

2. **STOP:** In response to what you learned during our JustFaith journey, what will you STOP doing? You might also include actions you need to STOP doing in order to START what you listed in question 1. (For example, in order to have time to *start* volunteering with an anti-racism agency, someone might have to *stop* going to the gym one afternoon a week). Ask participants to write their answers in the second column.
3. **CONTINUE:** List in the third column the actions you want to CONTINUE doing in response to your JustFaith journey. (For example, someone might *continue* to read books and articles on racial justice).
4. **FIRST STEPS: Look at your list.** What are the first real, concrete steps you will take in order to get started with the items on your START list? Be sure to give yourself a timeline or “due date.” For example: By Monday of next week, I will have written an email to my priest/pastor to address racism in our church.

Questions for group reflection:

- How will we hold one another accountable to these resolutions?
- Are there things we want to stop, start, or continue doing as a group?

Under “Commitment”, write down one action item to which you would like to commit aloud during the closing prayer.

Start, Stop, Continue

<u>Start</u>	<u>Stop</u>	<u>Continue</u>

<u>First Steps</u>
<u>Commitment</u>

From *The Rule of Benedict*

“It is high time for us to arise from sleep.” {Rom 13:11} {RB Prologue: 8}

“Turn away from evil and do good; let peace be your quest and aim.” {Ps 33 [34]:14-15} {RB Prologue: 17}

“Who will dwell in your tent, Lord; who will find rest upon your holy mountain? {Ps.14[15]:1} {RB Pro:23} “One who has not wronged a fellowman in any way.” {Ps14[15]:2-3} {RB Pro:26}

“The good of all concerned~safeguard love” {RB Pro:47}

“We are not to love one more than another.” {RB 2:17}

“A man born free is not to be give higher rank than a slave who becomes a monk.” {RB 2:18}

“Whether slave or free, we are all one in Christ {Gal 3:28; Eph 6:8} and share alike in bearing arms in the service of the one Lord, for God shows no partiality among persons.” {Rom2:11} {RB 2:20}

“Only in this are we distinguished in his sight: if we are found better than others in good works and in humility.” {RB 2:21}

“Show equal love to everyone.” {RB 2:22}

“First of all, love the Lord God with your whole heart, your whole soul, and all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.” {Matt 22:37-39; Mark 12:30-31; Luke 10:27} {RB 4:1}

“You must honor everyone {1 Pet 2:17} and never do to another what you do not want done to yourself.” {Tob 4:16, Matt 7:12; Luke 6:31} {RB 4:8-9}

“Go to help the troubled and console the sorrowing.” {RB 4:18}

“They should each try to be the first to show respect to one another.” {Rom 12:10} {RB 72:4}

“Earnestly compete in obedience to one another.” {RB 72:6}

“Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may he bring us all together to everlasting life.” {RB 72:12}