

Dealing with a “Woke” culture: fighting injustice without tearing each other apart

Objective:

A lot of Catholics are legitimately concerned about societal injustice and eager to do something about it. Several recent secular “social justice” movements have captured the hearts of many, but some may not be aware of certain troubling aspects of these “woke” movements. Without minimizing legitimate wrongs that have been committed to minorities and the marginalized, we must be prepared to defend and promote our biblically based and deeply wise Catholic social teaching tradition, to combat those areas of “woke” ideology that conflict with the teachings of Christ and his Church.

Song Suggestion: We Are Called, Gather (red) 710.

Bible and Catechism Readings

1 John 4:19-20

We love because he first loved us. Those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.

Proverbs 21:13

If you close your ear to the cry of the poor, you will cry out and not be heard.

Acts 10:27-28

And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled; and he said to them, “You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.

Catechism 1931

Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that “everyone should look upon his neighbor (without any exception) as ‘another self,’ above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity.” No legislation could by itself do away with the fears, prejudices, and attitudes of pride and selfishness which obstruct the establishment of truly fraternal societies. Such behavior will cease only through the charity that finds in every man a “neighbor,” a brother..

Saint: Saint Moses the Black is the patron saint of Africa. He started life as a slave. Moses found great peace and purpose by turning his life over to God and adopting a peaceful way. He managed to convert and touch hearts through his enthusiastic embrace of peace and suffering for others.

Vignette: – Gary and his wife were all too aware that their teenage children had been affected by “woke” ideology through the internet as well as at school. They had tried to raise their children to be compassionate Christian Catholics, but somehow their kids no longer saw the church as a champion of the poor and downtrodden. In particular, they felt the church hated all gay and trans people. One evening at the dinner table, Gary’s daughter spoke up: “Dad, you probably won’t be happy with me, but today I stood up for a trans kid that some boys were mocking and insulting. I know you don’t believe in all that trans stuff, but some of my friends are trans.” Gary was shocked that his daughter would think that he would ever condone that kind of behavior. So he smiled, and said to her, “You’re wrong. In fact, I am very proud of you. We are all God’s children and no one should be treated like that. Good for you.”. Now it was his daughters turn to be shocked!

Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:

How can I as a father demonstrate to my children the need to speak out against injustice, racial or otherwise? What if I have never experienced this kind of injustice personally? What are some teachable moments where I can point out the compassion of Christ for the poor and victimized?

What are some actions I can take to show that I care about racial injustice, without aligning myself with organizations not supported by the church (for example, Black Lives Matter, knowing that they promote LGBT ideology and oppose the nuclear family.). Can I make a case for how the teachings of the Church might guide our behavior?

Many corporations and institutions have DEI policies and/or personnel (diversity, equity, and inclusion). What is the best attitude to adopt when faced with training materials that you find to be objectionable?

How can I present the Church's teachings on marriage, while simultaneously showing compassion and acceptance for those who are LGBT? Am I prepared to give positive examples of what makes marriage between a man and a woman unique and necessary for society?

In the end, can I accept things in the secular world as they are, not as I would like them to be? Can I find the good intentions of those with whom I disagree?

Resources:

<https://angelusnews.com/arts-culture/bishop-barron-why-the-church-cant-stay-woke-or-stay-quiet/>

<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/online-edition/can-catholics-get-woke>

<https://www.christianheadlines.com/columnists/guest-commentary/how-would-christ-respond-to-awokeness.html>

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/249503/archbishop-gomez-addresses-rise-of-awokeness-social-movements-in-us>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/feeling-our-way/202108/the-psychology-awokenism>

[Awake, Not Woke: A Christian Response to the Cult of Progressive Ideology](#), by Noelle Mering

Action Plan:

1. Pray today for all who are subject to racial discrimination
2. Pray for wisdom and compassion, then have an honest discussion with your kids about showing kindness to others regardless of their appearance, their race, etc

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