



**We are  
Called**

TO HEAL. TO UNITE. TO JUSTICE.

## Team Reflection – Huddle

### No. 3 Structural Racism & Injustices: Curing a Larger Virus

Systemic racism involves the policies and systems that reinforce racial discrimination and unfair treatment of some groups. [3.1]

The lending process for homeownership over the past century is an example of systemic racism. In 1934, as low fixed-interest mortgage rates became available, lenders created residential maps with red lines around blocks and neighborhoods believed to default on new loans. People living within the red lines found it nearly impossible to buy or refinance homes.

Those who could move from redlined areas did. For those that stayed, home values dropped, as did property taxes and, therefore, monies for public education. Weakened public school systems limited access to higher education and advancement for young people in redlined communities. Additionally, these neighborhoods are more likely to be located next to industrial plants and manufacturing that spew pollutants. There are fewer grocery stores and less access to fresh foods. These factors worsen residents' health and become factors in the social determinants of health. [3.2]

When reflecting upon the pandemic in the summer of 2020, Pope Francis made these remarks: "We must also cure a larger virus, that of social injustice ... the lack of protection for the weakest. ... If there are unhealthy social structures that prevent them from dreaming of the future, we must work together to heal them, to change them." [3.3]

#### **Consider**

Where do you see the effects of systemic racism or other systemic injustices?

**Let us pray together,**

*Eternal God,*

*May we work to secure justice and equality for every human being,  
an end to all division, and a human society built on love and peace.*

*We ask this in your holy name, AMEN.*

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[3.1] This definition comes from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and research with the Rand Corporation: <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2021/01/survey--attitudes-views-and-values-around-health-equity-and-race-amid-covid-19.html>

[3.2] Redlining: National Public Radio, Code Switch "Housing Segregation and Redlining in America: A Short History," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5FBJyqfoLM>; and this video illustrates the situation well: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5FBJyqfoLM>

[3.3] Pope Francis, General Audience, 19 August 2021.  
[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2020/documents/papa-francesco\\_20200819\\_udienza-generale.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2020/documents/papa-francesco_20200819_udienza-generale.html)