



**We are  
Called**

TO HEAL. TO UNITE. TO JUSTICE.

## Team Reflection – Huddle

### No. 4 Unseen: Obscured by Class & Ethnicity

Dr. Aana Marie Vigen, a theology professor and researcher, captured narratives from women of color about their health care system experiences. The women Vigen interviewed did not experience overtly racist or biased behaviors. Instead, as Sophia, a 41-year-old Black Puerto Rican, describes, it is a feeling that providers looked at her in a limiting way — limited who she was or could be in their eyes. "They don't dislike you, and they don't think bad of you. They just limit you. They just automatically believe that you can't — that you're probably on a certain level. And they are surprised if you're any higher ... in terms of your standard of living, in terms of etiquette, speech, mannerisms."

There are, however, caregivers of hope, like the white woman who was Sophia's breast surgeon. Sophia felt they established mutual respect. "You know, I see her like, you don't judge me; I don't judge you. That's how I see her." [4.1]

In Catholic health care, we share and draw from the same tradition. Our tradition affirms that each person bears a spark of the divine within them. We are called to look for it and reverence it in every person we care for and encounter.

#### Consider

How might a culture of inclusion and belonging emerge if patient summaries (or employee feedback) began with a notation of the person's positive attributes?

#### Let us pray together,

*If every human being possesses an inalienable dignity,  
if all people are my brothers and sister,  
and if the world truly belongs to everyone,  
then it matters little whether my neighbor was born in my country or elsewhere.*

- Pope Francis, "Fratelli Tutti" Encyclical Letter on Fraternity and Social Friendship

[4.1] Aana Marie Vigen, Women, Ethics, and Inequality in U.S. Healthcare: To Count Among the Living (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), 137–140.