

We are Called

TO HEAL. TO UNITE. TO JUSTICE.



Team Reflection—Huddle

No. 6 Infant Mortality

Attention –Content covers sensitive topics pertaining to the loss of a child. Feel free to dismiss yourself from in-person participation if at any time if you feel uncomfortable or feel the need to give yourself space.

The health and flourishing of children, especially infants, is one significant marker of the health of a society. While overall trends have moved in a favorable direction, the sobering reality is that compared to other countries, the U.S. ranks near the bottom for the number of infant deaths per live births [6.1]. Not only this, these grim and heart-wrenching realities are worse for racially and ethnically diverse populations. Black and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander families experience infant mortality at more than double the rate of white women and families, followed closely by American Indian/Alaska Natives. [6.2]

Many hospitals and systems have made bold commitments to reduce infant mortality. Of course, it is impossible to erase the anguish of parents who have lost a child. Simply being with others in grief, honoring the pain and bearing one another's burdens, are not only a part of racial healing and health equity, but also are a part of our heritage. Jesus' own mother, Mary, stood at the cross as her son died, and the scriptures tell us she was not alone. Other women and men, stood in solidarity with Mary, bearing the immense burden of his death with her in friendship, dedication and love [6.3].

Consider

What might it look like today for us to imitate the women and men who remained close to Mary at the foot of the cross?

Let us pray together,

O Lord of Life and Death,

My soul is weighed down with sorrow and bears a lifelong wound.

Send to me Your angel of consolation for the pain is heavy and deep.

Support me, O God, and wrap me in Your gentle love.

AMEN.

Adapted from *Prayer for the Domestic Church*, by Edward Hays, 1979.

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[6.1] https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr63/nvsr63_05.pdf

[6.2] <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/infantmortality.htm>

[6.3] The Gospel of John tells of the beloved disciple at the foot of the cross along with Jesus' mother, Mary and others. John 19:25-27.