

On the Anniversary of Slavery and Racism – August 25th

Courtesy of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth

Leader: Today, August 25, we remember with contrition the landing of the first ship carrying enslaved Africans that landed at Point Comfort, today's Fort Monroe, in Hampton, Virginia. Although we know slavery was present on our shores before then, this day in 1619 marked a turning in our country and the original sin of the Americas.

Opening Prayer: “Laments are cries of anguish and outrage, groans of deep pain and grief, utterances of profound protest and righteous indignation over injustice, wails of mourning and sorrow in the face of unbearable suffering. Laments name the present pain, and forthrightly acknowledge that life and relationships have gone terribly wrong. Lamentations transcend the logic of reason, rational analysis, study and planning. They pierce the crusty calluses of numbness, cynicism, indifference, and denial.” ~Bryan Massingale

Song: Refrain from *Balm in Gilead* as mantra (Gather #353) or another song

Refrain: There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole, there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.

Leader: In the **LCWR 2016 Assembly**, a pledge was made to go deeper into the critical work of creating communion, examining the root causes of injustice and our own complicity, and purging ourselves, our communities and our country of the sin of racism and its destructive effects.

Examen for Racial Healing: (pause momentarily after each)

- Do I demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the issues of racism?
- Do I continually educate myself about racism?
- Do I reach out to make personal contact with people of different races?
- Do I listen carefully to people of color?
- Do I accept leadership from people of color?
- Which black voices am I listening to, praying with, and acting upon for a more equal community and country?

General Intercessions

Reader: God, we ask that black people will no longer bear the societal burden and emotional scars of centuries of enslavement, America's national shame, we pray ...

Response: O God, Heal Our Land and People

Reader: We ask that there will be an acknowledgement by all of America's original sin, slavery, we pray ...

Response: O God, Heal Our Land and People

Reader: We ask that there be more investments in black education and black health, especially through black institutions, we pray ...

Response: O God, Heal Our Land and People

Reader: We ask for reform in policing, based on crime and not color, we pray ...

Response: O God, Heal Our Land and People

Reader: We ask that you end inequities of mass incarceration that has crippled black families and communities, we pray ...

Response: O God, Heal Our Land and People

Reader: We ask that government subsidize college tuition rather than corporate greed, we pray ...

Response: O God, Heal Our Land and People

Reader: We ask that there be no-interest business loans, we pray ...

Response: O God, Heal Our Land and People

All: Gracious God, we offer you our lament and mourning for what systems and individuals have done to our black sisters and brothers. Help us to grow ever more humble in our listening and pray with our eyes open and feet firmly planted on the ground. Never let us grow accustomed to unrighteousness. We pray in your name. Amen.

Contemplate: What deeper commitment am I ready to make in light of the 2016 LCWR Assembly Resolution written on page one?

Closing Prayer: “We will have to repent in this generation, not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of individuals willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.” ~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Closing Song: *O Healing River* (Gather #242) or other appropriate song