

Diversity Dinner #1 - 6/16/19 - 6:30-8:00

Discussion on "There's No Scientific Basis for Race - It's a Made-Up Label"
National Geographic - April 2018

- 40+ people in attendance
- Prayer led by Bill Scott
- Pitch-in Dinner (meat & drinks provided)
- Overview of Race & Culture Committee from Fr. Michael
 - It came into being about 2 years ago with the intent purpose of having the STA community examine race relations, to see what the parish should be doing to improve racial equity in our community and in our world.
- Courageous Space Agreement - Explained & led by Susan Williams
- Overall thoughts about the Article from the group:
 - (Most people came to the discussion, having read the article - the majority indicated their agreement that there is no genetic basis for race)
 - Racism comes from fear of others and the fear of not being special or good enough.
 - A human trait is to put others down in order to feel superior.
 - Cultures are important.
 - Too bad that Samuel Morton's work (early 1800's) wasn't debunked earlier.
 - Morton's work became a justification for slavery.
 - Ancestry.com and 23andme are great tools, that will hopefully draw us closer together.
 - We as a people, want to identify and generalize people, and put them in categories. This is based on fear.
 - It was interesting to learn about the properties of DNA from the article.
 - History impacts the present.
 - Society judges the color of people as they are seen, without caring about their cultural beauty; this is wrong but happens.
 - Inside homogeneous cultures, people still find ways to degrade others.
 - People consciously and unconsciously devalue others, especially those different from them.
 - All oppression should be looked at, racial, as well as economic, etc.
 - Superior attitudes in America of being the "best" and many historical documents in the US are all based on lies.
 - Race is only a social construct used to control economics and resources.
 - There is some tension between many African Americans and Africans.
 - The term African American does not take into account people from Africa who have recently become citizens of America.

- Some people prefer the terms 'black'; others prefer "African American"; still others don't have a strong preference for either - much depends on self identification and cultural experience.
- White fragility needs to be identified, discussed and embraced, to further the cause of racial growth; it may be hard, but it is necessary.
- Science should not be the basis of racial beliefs; scientists are often influenced by the events of the times.
- Race can be a tool used to gain power, political and economic gain at the expense of people of color.
- Perhaps other variables could be used in the place of race as an acceptable way to describe the relationship between humans and their genes....geography, ancestry, population, ethnicity, peoples, populations, communities, culture.