

This past Fall, the Churches of Assumption and Resurrection (COTA-COR) in Fairport/Perinton conducted a unique, 7-part racial justice, educational program with the focus being on the United States Catholic Bishops' 2018 letter against racism. The program was designed as foundational with the plan to then go deeper, broaden community participation, and move beyond education to individual commitment and action.

An upcoming program in March again sponsored by COTA-COR titled "Sacred Conversations: "How To Be An Anti-Racist" will offer the opportunity to accomplish this objective. It will also provide opportunities to dialogue, engage, and listen to not only 15 people primarily from the Fairport community, but also 15 of our Black neighbors from Open Arms Christian Fellowship Ministries in Rochester.

“Sacred Conversations” was developed in Ferguson, MO in 2014 by an interfaith group after the unfortunate shooting and death of a young Black male, Michael Brown. In 2016, COTA was the first White faith community in our County to actually participate in this program together with another Black faith community in the City.

Plans are being made to update what was done in 2016 to include both historical and current events involving Fairport since our world is no different in this community than others across the country regarding our racial past and perpetuating ongoing institutional racism.

If you would like to learn more about your City neighbors, dig deeper within yourselves, confront your own individual racism apprehensions, and learn how to be inspired to move to action for change, then you should consider this program.

The program will be on **Saturday, March 7th and 14th, each from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.** The location is Open Arms Christian Fellowship Ministries at 461 Webster Avenue. It is important to note that a commitment for both sessions is required.

Please consider this one of the most important invitations you will receive this year ... and I assure you that this program will change forever how you view the world of the "other".

Information recap:

- Both Saturdays, March 7th **and** 14th
- Gathering/sign-in: 8:30; each session will start promptly at 9:00 AM; concluding at 1:00 PM
- Location: Open Arms Christian Fellowship Ministries, 461 Webster Avenue; street parking
- Facilitators: Reve. Wanda Wilson, Bill Wynne, Deni Mack, Sandy Wynne
- Commitment for both sessions is required
- Anticipated attendance/participation: 30 people split evenly between Black and White
- Refreshments will be served
- RSVP by February 7<sup>th</sup> is appreciated to Bill Wynne at [wewynne1@gmail.com](mailto:wewynne1@gmail.com) or 613-1288
- Although not required, a pre-reading of Ibram Kendi's "How To Be An Antiracist" is suggested
- The second session will conclude with individual testimony re: anti-racism action commitments

Lastly, for reflection ... “Action doesn’t mean busyness or “do-goodism.” It may not even mean activism, but it does mean serious engagement with the suffering of the world, beyond our own in-groups and identity groups. Rightly sought, action and contemplation will always regulate, balance, and convert one another. Separately, they are dead-ended and trapped in personality. For all of us, finding tangible ways of expressing our faith is an endless rhythmic dance. The steps change now and then, but Someone Else is always leading and it’s just up to us to “follow” along.” (Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, 1.10.20)

Also see:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?pli=1#inbox/FMfcgxwGCKgIBKfHVlxWhfbRsZLmvCR?compose=CIlgCJILWdDmTFNsFVNrfxzLZXWKMBfLnfrITvSFLxQcWkWkfwqFNJFdNMLDsMLrPgDzcRhNV>