



## PRAYER: Racial-Ethnic Relationships

*“The richness of our congregational internationalism, with its diverse cultural, missionary and apostolic traits, challenges each of us to be and to live the good news, as women of the Gospel.”*

**Symbols:** You can use pictures as an expression of the different races...

**Music:** A new day is coming... (or choose ...).

**Coordinator:** “Racism is an ideology that not only punishes the victim, it also makes the racist less of a human being, an incomplete human being, for being unable to accept otherness and diversity,” (Sueli Carneiro, a philosopher of African descent).

On one occasion, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, proclaimed these words that today have great impact for us: “The international community cannot accept that whole communities are marginalized because of their skin color.” There is essential to recognize the need to combat racism and economic and social inequalities. We want to join the United Nations initiative, and we are sure that all the foremost liberal forces will contribute to this effort.

**Reading:** We should be with all our brothers and sisters without rejection or racism and help the foreigner, those who are hungry and also those who are different from us. Read: Matthew, 25-35.

**Points for reflection:** An international survey developed by the Washington Post revealed some of the reality of a large number of countries around the world, especially as it pertains to tolerance or intolerance regarding ethnic-racial relationships. The data show:

-Anglo and Latin countries – namely in the United Kingdom and its former colonies (United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) and in Latin America, people are more tolerant and prone to racial diversity. The Scandinavian countries also scored high.

- India (43.5%) and Jordan (51.4%) are less tolerant. In only two of the 81 countries surveyed, more than 40 percent of respondents said they would not want to have a neighbor of a different origin. Bangladesh and Hong Kong 26.8% and 28.3 respectively, indicated that they would like to have a neighbor of a different ethnicity.

-In Europe, there is a wide variation. Immigration and national identity are major issues in Europe. The nations of Western Europe are more tolerant than those of Eastern Europe. France seems to be one of the least racially tolerant countries on the continent, with 22.7 percent saying that they did not want a neighbor of another race.

-In several Asian countries, tolerance is low. In Indonesia, the Philippines, China and Kyrgyzstan, many racial groups showed more skepticism regarding diversity. South Korea is not very tolerant and ethnically homogeneous.

Questions to reflect upon and share:

-Given the unequal situation among whites, blacks, native peoples, etc. in this society, it is not surprising that this development process unfolds in different ways. Change should be seen as a process throughout life. How is it possible to change both the individual and the institutional (congregation, Church, society...), with regard to ethnic-racial relationships? In your country or region, what are the organizations and social movements that claim and enforce the values of culture and citizenship? How can our participation be proactive?

Share in the form of comments and prayers...

**Music:** Choose appropriate music and...

**Prayer/Blessing:** (Numbers: 6: 24-26) - " The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and give thee grace; the Lord lift up his countenance to you and give you peace." Amen!