



SSND Solidarity Summer - Week Six The Blackness of God



Monday's SSND Solidarity Summer Webinar:

Featured Dr. Kimberly Vrudny, Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of St. Thomas. Professor Vrudny outlined stages of racial identity development, tracking the stages in lives of black folk as well as white folk. In addition, she discussed the "Blackness of God" with reference to a famous essay by AME theologian, James Cone.

Links to the August 17 Solidarity Summer webinar recording – [The Blackness of God](#) and to Professor Vrudny's [Presentation Slides](#)

(A closed captioning enabled recording of the presentation can be [found here](#).)

Link to presentation reactions shared via chat - [Download PDF of August 17 Chats](#)

[Click here](#) for links to all our previous webinars and related materials.

Optional Small Group Faith-Sharing Sessions on Thursday:

You are invited to join other webinar participants in some small group faith sharing this Thursday. We have two sessions, one at 2:30 pm and another at 6:30 pm. Each session will last less than an hour. Participants will be divided into small groups (4-6 people per group) for the faith-sharing. No reservations or Bluejeans app required, just click on the Bluejeans Meeting link below on Thursday to participate.

Faith-Sharing Sessions – just click on the link below to participate

- Thursday 2:30 pm Session - <https://bluejeans.com/131403397>
- Thursday 6:30 pm Session - <https://bluejeans.com/686457762>

Activity for Personal Integration:

Write a ["Letter to the Editor,"](#) or ["Letter to an Elected Official,"](#). Think about how you will craft each section based on what you've learned in the past six weeks of Solidarity Summer. What has meant most to you? What do you most want the wider community to know? And what would you like to see happen in the community as a result of taking in this knowledge?

- Write a salutation
- Grab your reader's attention with the opening line.
- Concisely explain the purpose and what your letter is about.
- Explain why the issue is important or summarize your understanding of the issue.

- Give evidence for praise or criticism of something related to racism happening in your community.
- State your opinion about what should be done or your position on the issue.
- Sign the letter.

Once you're satisfied with the letter, consider sending it to your news outlet of choice, or to your elected representatives.

For Personal Reflection:

Reflect on the phrase, "Becoming Human," especially in conversation with Jane Alexander's sculpture depicting three monstrous men who represent, according to Vrudny's interpretation, "whiteness," insofar as they participate in the destruction of black and brown lives.

Is it "monstrous", i.e., "sinful" in theological vocabulary, for a culture to bestow privileges to some on the basis of ethnicity?

Is it "monstrous", i.e., "sinful" in theological vocabulary, for a culture to bestow privileges on the basis of gender? Or is there a difference and, if so, why?

For Further Study:

- Fr. Bryan Massingale, "The assumptions of white privilege and what we can do about it", <https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/assumptions-white-privilege-and-what-we-can-do-about-it>
- Cone, James, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2013
- Cone, James. *A Black Theology of Liberation*. 40th Anniversary Edition. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010
- Cross, Jr., W. E. "Stages of Black Identity Development". *Black Psychology*, 3rd edition. San Francisco: Cobb and Henry, 1991.
- Farmer, Paul. *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- "God is Black." *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside*. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite and Mary Potter Engel, eds. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990.
- Goldberg, Susan B. and Levin, Cameron. "[Towards a Radical White Identity](#)." Alliance of White Anti-Racists Everywhere. Los Angeles.
- Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. 15th Anniversary Edition. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988.

- Helms, Janet E. *Black and White Racial Identity: Theory, Research, and Practice*. London: Greenwood Publishing, 1990.
- Horsley, Richard A. *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.
- Isasi-Diaz, Ada Maria. "Solidarity: Love of Neighbor in the 1980s." *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside*. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite and Mary Potter Engel, eds. San Francisco: Harper, 1990.
- Johnson, Elizabeth A. *Creation and the Cross: The Mercy of God for a Planet in Peril*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2018.
- Kidder, Tracy. *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World*. New York: Random House, 2004.
- Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth. *On Death and Dying: What the Dying Have to Teach Doctors, Nurses, Clergy & Their Own Families*. 50th Anniversary Edition. New York: Scribner, 2011.
- LaCugna, Catherine, ed. *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*. New York: HarperCollins, 1993.
- Malan, Rian. *My Traitor's Heart: A South African Exile Returns to Face His Country and His Tribe, and His Conscience*. New York: Grove Press, 2000.
- Massingale, Bryan N. *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010.
- McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." *Peace and Freedom Magazine*. Philadelphia: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. July/August 1989.
- Sobrino, Jon. *Spirituality of Liberation: Toward Political Holiness*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988.
- Sölle, Dorothee. *The Silent Cry: Mysticism and Resistance*. Minneapolis: Fortress, Press, 2001.
- Tatum, Beverly Daniel. "Talking About Race, Learning about Racism: The Application of Racial Identity Development Theory in the Classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*. 62/1, 1992.
- Vrudny, Kimberly. *Beauty's Vineyard: A Theological Aesthetic of Anguish and Anticipation*. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2016.
- Weaver, J. Denny. *The Nonviolent Atonement*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

- Wise, Tim. *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son*. New York: Soft Skull Press, 2004, 2011.

We are grateful for your participation in our SSND Solidarity Summer initiative. May our collective efforts lead to personal and communal transformation and ultimately help make the dismantling of racism a reality.

Sincerely,

CP Shalom Racial Justice Committee - Susan Adrians, Gen Cassani, Vicki Chambers, Tim Dewane, Kathleen Drilling, Maria Gomez, Gail Guelker, Vincella Lake, Rose Mercurio, Nancy McNemar, Barbara Pfarr, Waltermarie Ray, and Karen Walther



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