



The United States Association of

## The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

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**“I pray...that they all may be one.” (Jn. 17:21)**

*The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd especially honors the spiritual values of childhood and wishes to nurture the formation of a consciousness which is oriented to the construction of the history of salvation in justice and solidarity. #28 28 Characteristics of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, The 32 Points of Reflection*

This past Sunday we celebrated the great Feast of Pentecost, a celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit, a memorial of the seven holy gifts poured out upon the apostles so they could leave the upper room, transform the world and share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Since Monday, May 25, we have grieved the killing of George Floyd, and the many others who have been senselessly killed due to the heartbreaking truth that racism continues to choke the lives of our sisters and brothers of color in this country. This is, as Archbishop Gomez says, a “sin that cries out to heaven for justice.”

In these days of Pentecost, we have spent time listening, learning, and praying for the wisdom and understanding that will help all of us contribute to building bridges for change and reform even in the smallest of ways as we recognize that peace and justice begins within each of us. To aid our efforts, we would like to share a few links to resources that may aid our conversations and our prayers.

The Good Samaritan parable calls us to consider our role as we cannot remove ourselves from the wrongs committed in our society. Are we like those two in the parable, who “saw the man” and then “passed by on the other side”? In these days may we be “moved with compassion at the sight” of injustice and look to stand in solidarity with those who are vulnerable and oppressed.

In these days of Pentecost, let us ask God for the gift of Fortitude a holy daring given by the Holy Spirit so that we have the strength and courage to face challenges with compassion. Today this gift is an invitation to deeply love and care for everyone in our communities, to authentically live out our baptismal call to follow our Good Shepherd and respect the dignity of every human being. Biblically, this gift was lived out through prophecy – the prophet is one who has a particular capacity to listen to God. As catechists, we have learned to take a listening stance before God with the children. This is a capacity we can continue to cultivate as we listen deeply with our brothers and sisters of color in their pain, grief, anger, and hear the injustice they suffer. Only then can we truly work together to root out the systemic racism that continues to disrupt our American culture.

In her book, *The History of the Kingdom of God: From Creation to Parousia*, Sofia Cavalletti says, "If the prophet can be identified as a *voice*—the voice of God in the midst of the people—it is because he has first been an *ear*, straining to listen to what God has made known to him." She goes on to point out that God "establishes a particular relationship with the prophets; the Lord enriches them with a great gift that leads to a mission. The prophet lends his ear—and even more so his heart—to the word of God, not to keep it to himself but to share it with all people, so they might take instruction from it."

The Hebrew word for prophet is *nabi*. It is a word that literally means to "stand in the breach," to be a bridge. As Sofia indicates, it is "an action noun: that is expressed in passive form. The prophet is passive before God in receiving God's message, allowing it to penetrate and nourish him." "Who is my neighbor?" Once the word of God has penetrated the prophet, it leads to action. "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

## Statements from our Churches

[The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America](#)

[The Episcopal Church responding to racist violence](#)

[When the Cameras are Gone, We Will Still Be Here](#)

[U.S. Bishops' President on George Floyd and the Protests in American Cities](#)

[Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love](#)

## For Further Reflection

[the conscious kid](#)

[Talking with our children about race](#) Wendy Claire Barrie

[31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance](#) – EmbraceRace.

["Talking About Race" Web Portal](#) National Museum of African American History and Culture

[Anti-Bias Resources NAEYC](#) - The National Association for the Education of Young Children

[How Studying Privilege Systems Can Strengthen Compassion](#) - Peggy McIntosh TEDxTimberlane Schools

[Let's get to the root of racial injustice](#) - Megan Ming Francis TEDxRainier

[Equity and Inclusion](#) AMI USA