

# Our Journey



## The Impetus

- Signs of the Times: The murder of George Floyd, Jr., Charlottesville, Confederate Statues, COVID
- People of white felt that something needed to be done.
- Abby Causey starts *JustFaith* Racial Justice Modules, energized people of white.
- Deacon Charles Williams, Director for the Office for Black Catholics, challenges *JustFaith* groups to move from conversation to action.

2020

## Starting a Ministry: Listening, Discerning, Adjusting

- Abby invites leaders/members from *JustFaith* modules to a kick-off meeting
- Leadership Team and Wisdom Circle meet as a Steering Committee

2021

## Forming a Ministry

- Organizational Documents (Mission, Definition, Work Plan etc.)
- Revised Structure: Leadership Council
- Monthly Gatherings
  - Introduction of VCRJ Ministry
  - Prayer and Reflection on Deacon Charles
  - Sr. Cora Marie (History of Black Catholics in the Diocese of Richmond)
  - Nicole Drummond (Experiences in Catholic Schools)
  - Daniel Villar (Why Racial Justice is a Catholic Issue)
  - Cory Lockhart (Nonviolent Communication)
  - Dr. Mario Dance (Understanding Racism, Racial Tension and Racial Reconciliation)
  - The Journey Ahead (where we've been, where we want to go, and how "moving to the parish level" might look. (Sept. 2022)
  - St. Ignatius Anti Racism Task Force in Baltimore (Sustaining an antiracism ministry and parishioner involvement).
- Communication/Evangelization
  - Logo
  - Monthly Newsletter
  - Website
  - Pax Christi Conference Workshop

2022

- Synod Listening Session and Letter to Pope Requesting:
  1. Repudiate the Papal Bulls: Romanus Pontifex, Dum Diversas, Inter Caetera.
  2. Include Racial Justice as a specific tenet of Catholic Social Teaching.
  3. Increase formation for priests and seminarians in Black Catholic history, Catholic Social Teaching and Ecumenism.
- Encouraged and supported parishes to host Black Catholic History Month events
- Offered Nonviolence Communication *JustFaith* Ministries Module, *Want to Talk*

## VCRJ Continues the Work

- Offered *Breaking Open the Sin of Racism* from the University of Dayton
- Reached out to Father Tochi
- Engaged in the Day of Reflection and the National Black Catholic Congress (NBCC)
- Started Power of Story Project
- Started Working Groups
- Celebrated Juneteenth in Parishes
- JustFaith Just Action Module Offered which was the catalyst for the Saintly Six Initiative

2023

### Monthly Gatherings

- Dr. Shannen Dee Williams *Why Black Catholic History Matters*
- Dr. Shannen Dee Williams Encore Presentation
- Father Tochi, *The Challenges of Diversity*
- Sister Cora Marie, *Keep the Fire Burning*
- Dr. Jemar Tisby: *How to Fight Racism* (video)
- Racial Autobiographies

2024

- Introduced One to Ones
- Incorporated and formed BOD and related documents
- Offered “A Place at the Table” Lenten Series
- Partnered with Journey for Change
- Saintly Six initiative
- Faith and Racial Equity Module (2)
- Met with Bishop Knestout on Campus Ministry, NBCC Diocesan Plan and OBC
- Delille TinySaints Charm Project and Donation of charms to St. Mary’s Academy
- Presented a breakout at the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice and purchased an exhibit table
- National Roundtable Convened
- Requested Bishop designate Juneteenth as a diocesan holiday

### Monthly Gatherings

- Racial Autobiographies
- Mr. Ashley Morris, *Eucharistic Revival and Racial Justice*
- SHINE Conference
- Ralph Moore and Delores Moore: *The Saintly Six*
- Father Jim Curran: *The Beauty of Diversity*
- Sharing Our Stories
- Cathy Woodson, *Voting: A Sacred Right*
- Ralph Moore and Dr. Chiquita Tuttle, *Stand Up for the Saintly Six*
- An Election Reflection – “How are you doing?”

## This Year

2025

### GOVERNANCE

- Established the Education Working Group by resolution
- Approved financial policy
- Approved the Executive Director (Volunteer) job description

### NETWORKING/EVANGELIZATION

- Exhibited a table at the Shine Conference
- Sponsored a bus to the Thea Bowman Conference at The Catholic University of America
- Attended the Black Catholic History Exhibit Opening at the Black History Museum
- Attended the annual African Mass
- Presentation at the Faith and Resilience Series (OBC)

### COMMUNICATION

Website

Social Media

Friday Flash

### FORMATION

- Sowing Peace Lenten Series
- Faith and Racial Healing (1 group)

### MONTHLY GATHERINGS

- Dr. Alvin Schnexnider:  
*Confessions of a Black Academic*
- Brothers and Sisters All: A Catholic Approach to the Unfinished Business of Race Bias – Let's Continue the Discussion
- Stories of St. Frances de Sales and St. Emma Schools
- The JustFaith Impact
- The Knights and Ladies of Peter Claver Story

### ACTION

- Regional Juneteenth Gatherings in Norfolk and Richmond
- Initiated HBCU Connection in the absence of Campus Ministry
- Power of Story Gatherings for Norfolk/Portsmouth and Richmond



[www.vcrj.net](http://www.vcrj.net)



Virginia Catholics for Racial Justice