

Racial Justice Movie Discussion

The purpose of this movie discussion is to have meaningful conversation about racial justice pertaining to Catholic Social Teaching and artistic expression via film. We chose to engage the campus in this way because we believe personal discussions are very helpful in understanding these issues. Please know that we are all still learning here. None of us are perfect, and we want a movie discussion to be a space where you feel comfortable to speak and are not afraid of saying the wrong thing. Below are the questions we used to guide the conversation:

Questions for “Fruitvale Station”

1. What are your initial reactions to watching this movie?
2. One of people’s common responses to police brutality is justifications such as “They had a criminal record” or “Violence had already broken out.” Thinking about Oscar’s story, how would one respond to someone who reacts to police brutality in this way?
3. Which principles (human dignity, solidarity, care for God’s creation, call to family, community, and participation, option for the poor and vulnerable, rights and responsibilities, dignity of work) of CST did you view in the movie and how?
4. What did you learn about the harsh difficulties of the transition from life in prison back into society?
5. What was your reaction when learning that the officer who killed Oscar only served 11 months in prison for involuntary manslaughter and what did you learn about the ability for police to relatively get away with brutality?
6. Have you heard of “defunding the police”? How do you understand this concept? Do you think about it differently after viewing this movie?

Questions for “The Hate U Give”

1. In the movie, Starr expresses surprise about her response to the shooting of her best friend; “I always said that if I saw it happen to somebody, I would have the loudest voice, making sure the world knew what went down. Now I am that person and I’m too afraid to speak.” How have you responded to the recent murders of Black people by police officers? What are some ways we can work to raise up the voices of the Black community and call attention to systemic racism within our nation today?
2. Starr tells her boyfriend that if he doesn’t see her blackness, then he doesn’t truly see her. Is the idea of color-blind just a cover for underlying racial discrimination? How can we work to recognize diversity and all of its benefits? One of the themes of the Catholic Social Teachings is solidarity, recognizing that we are all one human family no matter the racial, ethnic, or cultural differences between us. What can we do in our daily interactions to uphold the solidarity principle of CST and stand with those facing systemic racism and discrimination?
3. In *Brothers and Sisters to Us*, the U.S. Catholic Bishops state, “Racism is a sin; a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father... It mocks the words of Jesus: “Treat others the way you would have them treat you.” Indeed, racism is more than a disregard for the words of Jesus; it is a denial of the truth of the dignity of each human being revealed by the mystery of the

Incarnation.” How did racism divide Starr’s community and even her family? Where do you see division in response today?

4. A big mantra in the movie is THUG LIFE, an acronym for “The Hate U Give Little Infants Fucks Everybody.” Starr explained, “Meaning what society gives us as youth, it bites them in the ass when we wild out.” What is your reaction to this belief? What is your remedy in a world that thinks this way? Reflect on your childhood and where you grew up. How was your view on race and class molded by your environment and the adults in your life? How can you curb your implicit bias and promote honesty within yourself and others?
5. After Khalil is killed, everyone at Starr’s school leaves early to attend the protests. How does this sudden flocking to act against racism juxtapose how people usually act? How is “being woke” or speaking out against racism viewed as a way of being cool? What is the appropriate way to speak out and stand against racism?
6. What was the most striking scene of the movie?