



Council of Bishops

The United Methodist Church



“Forced to Carry the Cross”

Dismantling Racism: Council of Bishops Lenten Devotional Series

Bishop Dr. Mande Muyombo, North Katanga Episcopal Area

March 31, 2021

Scripture: Luke 23:26

As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

Key points:

- Simon the Cyrene being forced to carry Jesus’ Cross points to the misuse of power.
- Racism is perceived superiority coupled with the exercise power to enforce dominance.
- Black, Indigenous and people of color have been forced to carry the cross of Jesus through force throughout history. Communities of color have, nevertheless, turned the burden into a blessing with the cross of Jesus being a pathway of liberation.
- The idea of race is deeply rooted in colonialism. Racism and Colonialism are two sides of the same coin.
- United Methodists must resist all forms of political, financial and systemic dominance that reinforces the notion of superiority in decision making and leadership in the church. This is particularly true in addressing racism and colonialism within the US Church and towards Central Conferences and other Methodist bodies around the world.

Questions for contemplation:

1. Does the Bible justify racism, resist racism or both?
2. How is the church complicit in the sin or racism and colonialism around the world?
3. What steps must be taken to dismantle systemic racism and colonialism within the United Methodist Church?

Journal Prompt: What is God saying to you through this week’s devotion?

