

**CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM, RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE;
PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, 2001**

MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN

- **Racism**
- **Discrimination**
- **National
Reconciliation**
- **Development**
- **Education**
- **Affirmative Action**
- **Freedom of
Conscience**

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace used the opportunity of a major world conference on racism held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 to republish its 1998 document, *The Church and Racism*, and issue this corollary. The *Contribution* cites extensively a number of interventions and addresses by Pope John Paul II. The document places a special emphasis on actions the Pope had taken in the Jubilee Year of 2000 to request pardon for Church actions of omissions that may have contributed to racism and discrimination.

The *Contribution* begins by noting an increase in racism and discrimination in the thirteen years since the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace published the *church and Racism*. The *Contribution* emphasizes the importance of the Church's appeal for personal conversion, and the necessity of requesting and granting pardons for past actions. The document stresses the importance of education in combating racism and the teaching of values such as human dignity and unity in promoting solidarity and the common good. The *Contribution* concludes by highlighting the importance of freedom of conscience and religion.

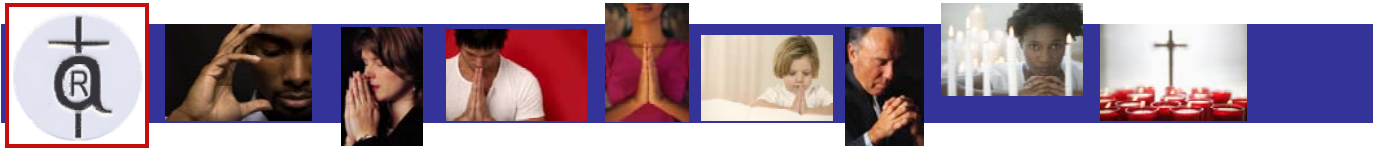
A. THE INCREASE IN RACISM

1. With the acceleration of globalization and the escalation of ethnic violence, racism has increased since 1988 (#'s 1-4).
2. "It is right to rejoice at the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa" (#4).
3. "While law may have abolished slavery everywhere, the practice still persists, notably in Africa among people of different ethnic groups" (# 4).

B. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S APPEAL FOR CONVERSION

1. "The contribution of the Catholic Church, in its constant appeal for personal conversion, is most important and necessary" (#5).

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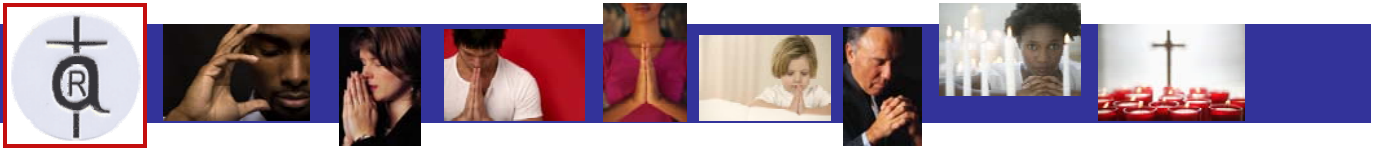
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2. “Christians in particular have the responsibility to offer a teaching that stresses the dignity of every human being and the unity of the human race” (# 5).
3. In the Jubilee Year of 2000, Pope John Paul II issued a solemn request for “pardon for past acts and omissions of the Church which may have encouraged and/or perpetuated discrimination against particular groups of people” (# 6).
4. After pardon is granted, “a ‘purification of memory’ then becomes necessary” (# 6).
5. “This occurs whenever it becomes possible to attribute to past historical deeds a different quality, having a new and different effect on the present, in view of the progress in reconciliation in truth, justice, and charity among human beings” (#6).
6. During the Jubilee Year, the Pope requested pardon for “faults committed in relations with the people of Israel... against the dignity of women... [from] the peoples of Africa for the slave trade... [and from] the American Indians and Africans deported as slaves” (# 7).

C. PARDON AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

1. The Church “hopes that political leaders and people, especially those involved in tragic conflicts, fueled by hatred and the memory of often ancient wounds, will be guided by the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation exemplified by the Church.” (# 8).
2. Conditional amnesty and “truth and reconciliation commissions” can assist nations which have been “destroyed and divided by serious conflicts” to engage in reconciliation (# 8).
3. “The weight of history, with its litany of resentments, fears, suspicions between families, ethnic groups or populations must first be overcome” (# 9).
4. “Local Churches have an active role to play, notably through their messages of forgiveness and reconciliation” (# 10).
5. “All forms of mediation therefore should be encouraged” (#10).
6. “Forgiveness has its own demands: the evil which has been done must be acknowledged and, as far as possible, corrected” (#11).
7. The “primary demands” of forgiveness are respect for truth and justice (#10).

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8. “The duty to make reparation must be fulfilled... reparation should erase all the consequences of the illicit action and restore things to the way they would most probably be” (# 12).
9. “The need for reparation reinforces the obligation of giving substantial help to developing countries, an obligation weighing chiefly on the more developed countries” (# 12).

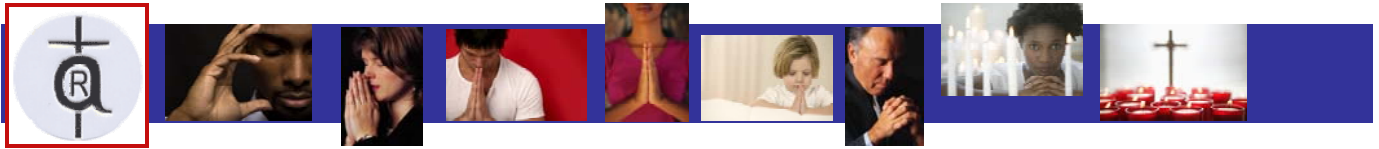
D. EDUCATION AGAINST RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

1. “The roots of racism, discrimination and intolerance are found in prejudice and ignorance, which are first of all the fruits of sin, but also of faulty and inadequate education” (#13).
2. “All people of whatever race, condition or age, in virtue of their dignity as human persons have an inalienable right to education” (# 13).
3. “Education is a matter of teaching the human being to become ‘ever more human,’ to ‘be more’ rather than to ‘have more’... to ‘be with others’ but even more to ‘be for others’” (#14).
4. Education should emphasize “certain major values such as the unity of the human race, the dignity of every human being, the solidarity which binds together all the members of the human family [and]... respect for human rights” (#15).
5. The media has a duty to promote “the common good” (#16).
6. Religions “must show that religious belief inspires peace, encourages solidarity, promotes justice and upholds liberty” (#17).

E. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

1. “These voluntary measures are intended to ensure effective recognition of the equality of all, for example by facilitating access to bank loans for a particular category of the population” (#18).
2. “The choice of this kind of policy remains controversial. There is a real risk that such measures will crystallize differences rather than foster social cohesion” (#19).

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3. Affirmative action “must be temporary... ought not to have the effect of maintaining different rights for different groups and... must not be kept in force once their objectives have been achieved” (#19).

F. IMMIGRANTS, POVERTY AND DISCRIMINATION

1. Everyone should “be generous in their welcome... and recognize that immigrants bring with them the riches of their culture, history and traditions” (# 20).
2. “The Local Churches... have not hesitated to enter into public debate in order to condemn racism and foster openness to immigrants” (# 20).
3. Since 1988, two great global divides have grown deeper: the first is the ever more tragic phenomenon of poverty and social discrimination and the other, more recent and less widely condemned, concerns the unborn child” (#21).
4. “Freedom of conscience and freedom of religion remain the premise, the principle and the foundation of every other freedom, human and civil, individual and communal “ (# 22).