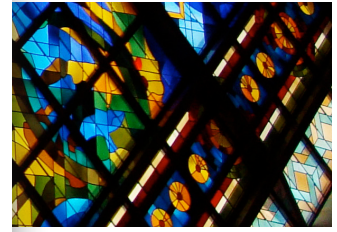




40 DAYS OF ENGAGEMENT on *Anti-Racism*



DAY 14

Leaving Classism to Encountering Racism

Emo Yango



Learning

Oh Canada.

I am finally leaving a country that discriminates against me:

- because of the poverty I was born in;
- because I went to public schools that did not offer elite education;
- because I worked in lesser known companies;
- because I live in a stigmatized part of the city where criminality is common occurrence;
- because there were always eyes following me when I shop at high end shopping malls.

Oh Canada.

I have finally immigrated with great expectations but why do I feel forces against me:

- because I still feel the pangs of poverty while working two jobs, though I am not using my professional skills;
- because I have found out that the educational degree that I brought with me is not recognized here;
- because I am told “You don’t have Canadian experience” every time I apply for work based on my professional skills;
- because I can only find housing where there are high incidents of criminality in my neighbourhood;
- because there are always eyes following me when I look around in shopping malls.

Oh Canada.

Is that what you call this?
Racism, eh!

I didn’t immigrate to experience racism.

But here I am.

It sure feels like I didn’t leave the old country after all.

Why might some immigrants initially be unaware of the truth of racism in this country?



Faith Reflection

Consider the following verse in Jeremiah 29:11:

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.”

- Consider the kind of lives that migrants coming into Canada might expect. If possible, make a list of these expectations.
- Based on the present realities that migrants and peoples of colour experience in Canadian society, especially during the pandemic, how hopeful do you suppose they are for their future?
- What prayers might you and your community of faith offer for migrants facing racism and other hardships?



Children's Activity

Maya Douglas

Story: Genesis 1: 26-31

Materials: New Revised Standard Bible or Inclusive Bible

Objective:

- To begin with an origin story.
- To review social skills around conversation.
- To build a family community.

Instructions:

1. Put all devices, such as phones or tablets, in a separate room.

2. Ask for a set of three to five agreements on how to be together. For example: “We will take turns to speak...”, and “We will listen with our hearts and minds...”
3. Have someone volunteer to read the Bible story.
4. Allow time for everyone to respond in turn to the story.

Reflection Questions:

- What is one new thing you learned from the story or never thought of?

- What do we believe is the first gift that God gave humans?
- Why do you think God blessed humans after creating them?
- How may sharing in this way help our family become anti-racist?

Love's Words:

Share genuine words of acceptance and encouragement, such as, “I feel blessed when you...” and “Something I am/you are good at is...”



Group Commitment

Consider and list various ways to be welcoming in your community of faith, where the experiences migrants might provide a hopeful future.

Select one or two items from the list you just made and prayerfully commit to find spaces where you can practice those items.



Advocacy

Gather with a group of immigrants to discuss how to approach your MPs and MPPs collectively to advocate for greater and equitable recognition of the professional training qualifications that immigrants bring.

Gather with a group of immigrants to identify how their experiences of discrimination in their country/region of origin are similar to their experiences of racism in Canada. Collectively partner with existing civic organizations already addressing racial injustices targeting new immigrants.



Emo Yango is originally from the Philippines. He works at the national office of The United Church of Canada where his work portfolio includes racial justice and intercultural ministries. He had previously worked overseas in international development in various inter-faith contexts.



Maya Douglas is the minister at St. James United Church of Etobicoke (Toronto). Her ministry is welcoming to families and children/youth. As a mother of four and an elementary teacher of 22 years, her anti-racism work spans all ages.

