

# Editorial: Now is the time to engage in – not silence – difficult conversations on race

As editors in the Catholic press, we often debate content through two lenses: what we believe our readers want to read, and what we believe our readers need to read.

One recent example: last week's editorial, in which this editorial board once again beat the drum of [transparency and truth-telling regarding Theodore McCarrick](#). To many readers, that may have felt repetitive, but until the Vatican releases the McCarrick report, we know it will continue to be necessary. Why? Because the search for, and proclamation of, truth matters, even when it makes us uncomfortable. Just look at the cross.

One conversation we need to have right now as Americans and as Catholics [is on racism](#). The original sin of our country, as many have called it, racism is so deeply rooted in many of our institutions and our relations with one another that it's often hard for us to recognize it. Sometimes, in fact, we don't want to.

Ongoing tough conversations on this critical issue – an issue that centers on our God-given dignity as human beings – became a source of contention in Catholic media late last week.

On Friday, June 26, Guadalupe Radio Network [abruptly suspended its airing of the EWTN Radio show "Morning Glory."](#) The Guadalupe Radio Network is EWTN's largest radio affiliate in the United States. Based in Midland, Texas, it operates 37 radio stations in Texas, New Mexico, Alabama, Florida, Kansas and Washington, D.C.

In recent weeks, “Morning Glory’s” co-host Gloria Purvis, who is Black, has used the show to engage in frank conversation regarding racism, including Church teaching on the subject, and related issues, including the need for police reform.

In a statement, Guadalupe Radio Network said that they were “not bothered in the least” that the show “took on the difficult, but needed, topic of the evil of racism.” The reason they suspended the airing of the show, they said, was because of a “spirit of contention’ growing among the hosts live on-air.”

The show, they argued, has become “more and more awkward and uncomfortable to listen to,” and the statement noted “a real disconnect among the team, becoming more and more obvious.”

“We do not feel that this type of exchange is edifying, nor is it clarifying for anyone, especially a Catholic radio listener who wants clarity.”

As members of the Catholic press, we strongly agree that it is critical to provide clarity of thought and Catholic teaching to a world desperately in need of the truth. Indeed, nothing is more important. But that clarity doesn’t just happen: We need to talk through policies, argue about procedures, look through the lens of Church teaching and try to find a meaningful way forward in faith. This is especially true when we’re discussing subjects as complicated as racism, race relations and police reform.

Honest, productive conversation that sifts through the muck in search of the truth is always challenging. It will be raw. It will be uncomfortable. But now is not the time to tune it out. There’s no better place to confront the issues head-on than within Catholic media. The common objective that we and our peers share is the discovery and promotion of truth. And the underlying virtue that we should all adhere to in such discussions is charity.

In that light, we would encourage Guadalupe Radio Network to reconsider its suspension of this critical conversation. No good can come from “canceling” dialogue.

In response to questions about the suspension, Michelle Johnson, EWTN’s communications director, told *Our Sunday Visitor* that no changes are planned regarding the status of “Morning Glory.” The program, Johnson said, is “still going strong.” While Johnson noted that EWTN’s affiliates have the right to choose which programs they do or do not broadcast, we believe EWTN missed an opportunity not only to endorse the conversations on racism that [Purvis was attempting to facilitate](#) but to explain why continuing those conversations is important and necessary.

Again, there’s nowhere better to have these spirited and even uncomfortable conversations than within Catholic media, where hosts and listeners are secure in the knowledge that all involved are working toward the common goals of truth and justice.

These are challenging times, and the best way to navigate them is through real, honest conversation. And when such conversation turns uncomfortable, Catholic media can shine – and become a beacon of truth to a world in desperate need of it.

*Our Sunday Visitor Editorial Board: Gretchen R. Crowe, Scott P. Richert, Scott Warden, York Young*