Conference on Racism and the Church

In response to a summer of racial unrest, Franciscan University hosted a conference on Racism and the Role of the Church. The five-day event addressed historical perspectives on racism and race relations, personal experiences related to race inside and outside the Church, and the Catholic Church's role in racial reconciliation.

"None of us want to deal with this," said Damon Owens, the executive director of joytob, a theology of the body ministry. "We are being forced to look dead-eye into a topic that this country has never wanted to address, to confront the realities that have happened and the facts of the present moment that a deep shame has kept us from doing."

Other presenters included philosophy professor Dr. John Crosby, who spoke on systemic racism, and Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, speaker and co-host of EWTN's "Morning Glory" radio show.

"Racial injustice and prejudice are antithetical to love and to truth, to freedom, and to peace," said Burke-Sivers.

The conference also included a Mass for racial reconciliation and unity, and a praise and worship concert with guest Ike Ndolo and Village Lights. The conference was sponsored by Franciscan University's Black Student Association. ■



Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers addresses students at the Racism and the Role of the Church Conference.