

# JustSouth QUARTERLY



SUMMER 2014



## The KIDS COUNT Gulf South

### Children in the region continue not to count much! By FRED KAMMER, S.J.

In recent years, scholars and policy-makers have developed alternative measures of “poverty” that look at a range of issues in measuring human well-being beyond the simpler economic “poverty line.” While there are a variety of such measures, the one that gained acceptance internationally is the *Human Development Report* and its Human Development Index adopted by the United Nations Development Program in 1990.<sup>1</sup> The focus is more on “human development” than “poverty,” drawing on the work of economist Mahbub ul Haq at the World Bank in the 1970s.

...Dr. Haq argued that *existing measures of human progress failed to account for the true purpose of development—to improve people’s lives*. In particular, he believed that the commonly used measure of Gross Domestic Product failed to adequately measure well-being.<sup>2</sup>

The index developed by Dr. Haq and others focuses on three key dimensions—a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living. This is a narrower focus than the full-blown human development categories but covers three measurable sets of markers that are considered crucial to human well-being.

#### The KIDS COUNT Index

One of the most valuable measures used in the U.S. context is the KIDS COUNT Index developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and published annually with data for the country, the states, and smaller political subdivisions.<sup>3</sup> Similar to the Human Development Index, the KIDS COUNT Index uses multiple indicators grouped under four headings or “domains”: Economic Well-Being, Education, Health, and Family and Community.

Under each domain, four key indicators are applied to every state to determine a domain score (e.g., health), and then each state is ranked by its domain score. Afterwards, the four domain scores are summed to give an overall score for the state, and then the states are ranked from best to worst scores.

Rank of Gulf South States on Selected KIDS COUNT Indicators [2013]

MEASURE	Alabama	Florida	Louisiana	Mississippi	Texas
Economic Well-Being	40	45	42	50	30
Education	44	35	45	48	31
Health	35	37	41	48	36
Family/Community	44	35	47	50	48
Overall Rank	44	38	46	49	42

—Continued on page 2

INSIDE

Catholic Social Thought and Wages .....page 3

KIDS IN CRISIS: The surge of unaccompanied immigrant children ....page 4

The Monstrous Elegance of White Supremacy .....page 6

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



## Illustrative Indicators for Each Domain for the U.S. and Gulf South States [2013]<sup>4</sup>

INDICATOR	United States	Alabama	Florida	Louisiana	Mississippi	Texas
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING: Children in poverty	23%	28%	25.6%	29%	35%	26%
EDUCATION: Fourth graders Not proficient in reading	68%	69%	61%	77%	79%	72%
HEALTH: Low-birthweight babies	8.1%	10%	8.6%	10.8%	11.6%	8.3%
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY: Children in single-parent families	35%	39%	40%	48%	49%	36%

Since mere rankings can hardly give a sense of the serious social and economic factors confronting children in the Gulf South, I have chosen a single KIDS COUNT indicator under each domain to illustrate particularly dire conditions faced by Gulf South children:

For economic well-being: *Children in Poverty*—the percentage of children under age 18 living in families with incomes under 100 percent of the U.S. poverty threshold determined each year by the Census Bureau.

For education: *Fourth-graders not proficient in reading*—the percentage of fourth-grade public school students who did not reach the proficient level of reading as measured by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP).

For health: *Low-birthweight babies*—the percentage of live births weighing less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds).

For family and community: *Children in single-parent families*—the percentage of children under age 18 who live with their own unmarried parent either in a family or subfamily. In this definition, single-parent families may include cohabiting couples. Children living with married stepparents are not included.

The table above reflects these four adverse indicators for children in the United States and the Gulf South states, as taken from the 2013 KIDS COUNT index.

Even these figures fail to capture the reality that Gulf South children of color, especially African-American and Hispanic children, fare far worse in the KIDS COUNT calculations than do non-Hispanic whites. For example, the percentage of African-American children in poverty is 46 percent in Alabama, 40 percent in Florida, 46 percent in Louisiana, 52 percent in

Mississippi, and 34 percent in Texas. The percentage of Hispanic children in poverty is 45 percent in Alabama, 31 percent in Florida, 29 percent in Louisiana, and 35 percent in Texas (a statistically reliable Mississippi percentage is unavailable). In contrast, the percentage of non-Hispanic white children in poverty is 16 percent in Alabama, 15 percent in Florida and Louisiana, 19 percent in Mississippi, and 11 percent in Texas.

### The Moral Challenge

In 1990, St. John Paul II wrote to the secretary of the United Nations, “Indeed, in the Christian view, our treatment of children becomes the measure of our fidelity to the Lord himself.”<sup>5</sup> Because of their vulnerability, children are entitled to nurturance and protection, not just from their families but from society itself. Protecting them, educating them, providing necessary health care, and assuring economic security for their families is an intrinsic part of the responsibility of governments at all levels for the common good of society and right relationships among various societal groups.

When at least one of every four children in the Gulf South lives in poverty and one-half to one-third of children of color do so, society has failed abysmally in its duties to the “least among us.” Moreover, the above statistics on the economic security, education, health status, and family well-being of our Gulf South children seem to promise little by way of assurance that the future of our region will be one of equality of opportunity. Nor do these statistics provide much promise that future generations of children will be liberated from the neglect and unjust social systems in which we seem so mired.

Legislatures in the Gulf South continue these destructive patterns for Gulf South children year after year as they make decisions that underfund public education, continue punitive welfare restrictions, refuse expanded Medicaid coverage for the working poor, tax poor families, and pretend that the current minimum wage provides full-time workers with any hope of moving beyond subsistence living. Their responsibility, however, is shared by those of us who remain silent in the face of gross inequality, poor education, and unequal access to health care or who pay our own employees subsistence wages with minimal benefits.

### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The Human Development Index and its application to the Gulf South states was discussed in “The Measure of Poverty,” *JustSouth Quarterly*, Spring 2010, pp. 8-10 by Fred Kammer, SJ, at [www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/MeasureofPoverty-Spring2010jsq.pdf](http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/MeasureofPoverty-Spring2010jsq.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> The American Human Development Project of the Social Science Research Council, *The Measure of America: American Human Development Report 2008-2009*, p. 10. Cf. [www.measureofamerica.org](http://www.measureofamerica.org) (accessed 1/29/10).
- <sup>3</sup> The KIDS COUNT Data Book for 2013 can be accessed at [datacenter.kidscount.org/publications/databook/2013](http://datacenter.kidscount.org/publications/databook/2013)
- <sup>4</sup> While the data is taken from the 2013 KIDS COUNT reports, the data actually may be from years 2011-2013, depending on the statistical sources and the indicators (accessed May 22, 2014).
- <sup>5</sup> Pope St. John Paul II, *Letter to His Excellency Javier Pérez de Cuellar, Secretary General of the United Nations Organization, on the occasion of the World Summit for Children*, Sept. 22, 1990, citing Matthew 18:5.



## Catholic Social Thought and Wages

Setting a minimum wage and requiring such benefits as social security, workers' compensation, and unemployment compensation are ways in which governments historically have acted to protect worker dignity, encourage family formation, and ensure the basic rights and needs of children and those who are poor.

Discussion about wages in Catholic social thought (CST) revolve around two key principles. The first is the *just wage*, meaning that wages that do not allow workers to support themselves, their families, or the common good demean human dignity and human life. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, citing the Second Vatican Council, spells it out this way:

*A just wage is the legitimate fruit of work. To refuse or withhold it can be a grave injustice. In determining fair pay both the needs and the contributions of each person must be taken into account. "Remuneration for work should guarantee man the opportunity to provide a dignified livelihood for himself and his family on the material, social, cultural, and spiritual level, taking into account the role and the productivity of each, the state of the business, and the common good." Agreement between the parties is not sufficient to justify morally the amount to be received in wages.<sup>1</sup>*

Rooted in the most fundamental principle of human dignity, modern CST has developed the concept of a just family wage, first enunciated in 1891,<sup>2</sup> to include the provision of such social benefits as health care, coverage of work accidents, inexpensive or free medical assistance for workers and families, old age pensions and insurance, and appropriate vacations and holidays as expressions of the economic rights of the human person.<sup>3</sup> These duties to pay just wages and benefits fall primarily on employers. "They commit grave injustice who refuse to pay a just wage or who do not give it in due time and in proportion to work done."<sup>4</sup>

Some will argue that the marketplace determines the level of wages and that markets should be allowed to function freely and without interference. CST always has endorsed the potential benefits and freedoms of a market economy. It also has noted that in industrialized societies entrepreneurs, "following the principle of maximum profit, tried to establish the lowest possible wages for the work done by the employees."<sup>5</sup> CST thus teaches as a second principle that, in addition to the moral duty of employers, government's responsibility for the common good includes protection of human rights and the rights of workers.

As St. John XXIII explained:

*As for the State, its whole purpose is the realization of the common good in the temporal order. It cannot, therefore, hold aloof from economic matters. On the contrary, it must do all in its power to promote the production of a sufficient supply of material goods, "the use of which is necessary for the practice of virtue." It has also the duty to protect the rights of all its people, and particularly of its weaker members, the workers, women and children. It can never be right for the State to shirk its obligation of working actively for the betterment of the condition of the workingman.<sup>6</sup>*

Setting a minimum wage and requiring such benefits as social security, workers' compensation, and unemployment compensation are ways in which governments have acted historically to protect worker dignity, encourage family formation, and ensure the basic rights and needs of children and those who are poor. CST has strongly supported these developments.

The failure to set a minimum wage and to provide for appropriate benefits is a failure in the duty of government officials to workers and their families in keeping with government's responsibility for the common good.

### ENDNOTES

- 1 Libreria Editrice Vaticana, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1992, no. 2434.
- 2 Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 1891, nos. 63 and 65.
- 3 St. John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens (On Human Work)*, 1981, no. 19.
- 4 Pontifical Council on Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2005, no. 302, citing the following passages from Scripture: *Lv. 19:13; Dt. 24:14-15; Jas 5:4*.
- 5 St. John Paul II, *op.cit.*, no. 11.
- 6 St. John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra (Mother and Teacher)*, 1961, no. 20.



# KIDS IN CRISIS:

## The surge of unaccompanied immigr

A humanitarian crisis of epic proportion is unfolding along the U.S.-Mexico border. Since October of last year 52,000 children have been apprehended by U.S. Border Patrol after crossing into the U.S. without family members.<sup>1</sup> Officials estimate that 90,000 unaccompanied migrant children may be apprehended by the end of the year, and as many as 140,000 children next year.<sup>2</sup> On June 2 President Obama appointed the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to lead the government's response to the crisis. His administration is requesting

\$1.4 billion in additional funding from Congress to help feed, house, and transport the children and has turned to the Defense Department to provide temporary housing.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the children crossing the border are from four countries: Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Whereas Mexican children are almost always immediately returned to their home country, other child migrants are automatically put into deportation proceedings and within 72 hours placed in the custody of the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). In fiscal year 2013, 37 percent of child migrants in HHS custody were from Guatemala, 30 percent were from Honduras, and 26 percent were from El Salvador.<sup>4</sup>

Sometimes the family pays a smuggler to bring the child to the border; other times a child comes on his or her own. During their long and difficult journey children experience severe deprivation—not knowing when they will eat or drink next. The threat of violence and exploitation from human traffickers, drug traffickers, or police authorities is ever present. Human smugglers may abandon children when the journey becomes too risky. Adolescent girls are frequently the victims of sexual assault. As a result of the treacherous journey north, many children are deeply scarred by their migration experience.<sup>5</sup>

In November, 2013, a delegation from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops traveled to Central America and southern Mexico to investigate the flight of unprecedented numbers of unaccompanied child migrants to the U.S. They found no easy answer as to why so many children are making the dangerous journey north, but rather that a series of interrelated factors have contributed to a “perfect storm” to create this phenomenon. While push factors including widespread poverty, lack of educational opportunities, and the desire to reunite with family members are all operative, the delegation's report concludes that the overwhelming reason that children are fleeing in recent years is because of pervasive violence in the sending countries and a corresponding collapse of the rule of law which have created a “culture of fear and hopelessness.”<sup>6</sup>

A 2013 study by Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), which provides pro bono legal counsel to unaccompanied immigrant children who enter the U.S. immigration system, found that 30% of the children referred to their services<sup>7</sup> migrated to escape gang violence and intimidation. Frequently, boys were targets of forced conscription by gangs once they entered adolescence. Some of KIND's female clients reported being raped by gang members who wanted them to join the gang and become their “girlfriends.” Children with a family member in the U.S. who could send home remittances were often intimidated through violent assaults to make regular payments (“renta”) to the gang.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to suffering violence perpetrated by gangs and other criminal actors such as drug cartels or corrupt law enforcement authorities, a significant number of children have fled their home countries to escape violence at the hands of family members. United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) researchers interviewed 404 unaccompanied children who had arrived in the U.S. after September 2011 to determine their reasons for leaving. While 48 percent shared experiences of how they had been personally affected by organized criminal actors, 22 percent of the children spoke of the abuse and violence they received in their homes from parents or other family members.<sup>9</sup> Research on migration in Latin America and the Caribbean indicates that migration of a parent, especially if he or she is a caregiver, is a key cause of family disintegration



A child migrant's journey is fraught with danger. In this photo, youth risk amputation to ride a train, known as *La Bestia* (The Beast), to northern Mexico.

# rant children to the border

BY SUE WEISHAR, PH.D.

and increases in child abuse and exploitation.<sup>10</sup> Many of the children interviewed by KIND were abused by non-parental family members who were entrusted with the child's care after a parent had migrated.<sup>11</sup>

If the children reach the U.S. and are placed in HHS custody, they are then cared for through a network of state licensed care facilities such as group homes, foster care, youth shelters, and residential treatment centers funded and monitored by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), the agency within HHS assigned responsibility for the care of unaccompanied child migrants in 2002 because of its extensive experience serving the social needs of refugees. Many of the care facilities are located near the Texas border with Mexico. According to ORR data from FY 2013, three fourths of the unaccompanied child migrants in HHS custody were over 14 and 73% were boys. The average length of stay was 35 days and 85% of the children were reunified with family members or other sponsors in the U.S. through family reunification services provided by the care facilities.<sup>12</sup> It is the responsibility of the family to secure legal representation for the child—a daunting task.<sup>13</sup>

No community in the United States has been more impacted by unaccompanied child migrants than the Rio Grande valley. Fourteen shelters for unaccompanied immigrant children are funded by ORR in the valley. Long-time border activist Michael Seifert told me in a recent phone conversation, however, that many children who avoid detection by Border Patrol end up living in shacks or the brush in rural areas in the valley and that these children are prime targets of traffickers.<sup>14</sup>

Seifert believes the U.S. played a large role in creating the crisis of unaccompanied child migrants: “We were the ones who sent the gang members back to Central America after they were arrested in Los Angeles. We were the ones who cheerfully signed into

law NAFTA without understanding how it would just suffocate village economies...In so many ways this is worse than the Central American migration in the 90's because these are children.”<sup>15</sup>

The surge of unaccompanied child migrants to the border has happened at the same time that unprecedented numbers of parents traveling with children have crossed the border—about 39,000 parents who came with children had been apprehended by June of this fiscal year. Because the only immigration detention center for families, located in Pennsylvania, was already filled to capacity, most families were released by Border Patrol with an order to appear in immigration court in 30 days.<sup>16</sup> The Obama Administration announced plans on June 20 to accelerate deportations of families, including sending more immigration judges to south Texas and opening new detention facilities for families along the border—despite concerns advocates are raising of the profoundly damaging affects that detention has on the physical and mental health of children and parent-child relations.<sup>17</sup> The administration is also funding public-service announcements on Latino media about the dangers of coming illegally to the U.S. Kevin Appleby, Director of Migration Policy for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, warns, however, that without addressing the violence that causes people to flee, we are forcing vulnerable migrants back into what amounts to a war zone. “The danger they face at home is still far greater than they face trying to reach safety in the U.S. or other countries.”<sup>18</sup>

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Seung Min Kim, “White House unveils new plan to address immigration crisis,” *Politico*, June 20, 2014.
- 2 Brett Logiurato, “There’s a staggering humanitarian crisis on the US border, and it’s only going to get worse,” *Business Insider*, June 16, 2014.

- 3 Alicia A. Caldwell, “Surge in children crossing border alone strains patrol,” *Associated Press/The New Orleans Advocate*, June 6, 2014.
- 4 *About Unaccompanied Children's Services*, Office of Refugee Resettlement, at [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/ucs/about](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/ucs/about). Although the majority of unaccompanied children apprehended by U.S. Border Patrol are from Mexico, most are returned to Mexico within one or two days. Only 3% of children in HHS custody in FY 2013 were from Mexico. Until 2008 virtually all unaccompanied children from Mexico were turned around at the border and returned to Mexico. In December 2008 legislation passed by Congress required that U.S. Customs and Border Protection also screen unaccompanied children from Mexico for protection concerns and vulnerabilities and refer qualifying children to HHS. It is not clear if this policy is being fully implemented. See: *The Time is Now: Understanding and Addressing the Protection of Immigrant Children Who Come to the United States, Kids in Need of Defense*, February, 2012.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 *Mission to Central America: The Flight of Unaccompanied Children to the United States*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2014.
- 7 Children are only referred to KIND if they have a potential claim for a form of immigration relief such as a Special Juvenile visa for abandoned or neglected children, a T visa for victims of human trafficking, a U visa for victims of crime in the U.S., or a family reunification visa for children with parents with legal status.
- 8 Op. Cit., Kids in Need of Defense.
- 9 *Children on the Run: Unaccompanied Children Leaving Central America and Mexico and the Need for International Protection*, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Regional Office for the United States and Caribbean, 2014.
- 10 Anna Lucia D’Emilio, Berenice Cordero, Bertrand Bainvel, Christian Skoog, Debora Comini, Jean Gough, Monica Dias, Rhea Saab, and Teresa Kilbane, *The Impact of International Migration: Children Left Behind in Selected Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean*, UNICEF, May, 2007. Study on impact of migration in Mexico found that when family caregivers migrate to the U.S., the remaining family members in Mexico struggle to meet the family’s needs and children are more vulnerable to educational, emotional, and health problems. See: Jody Heymann, Francisco Flores-Macias, Jeffery Hayes, Malinda Kennedy, Claudia Lahaie, and Alison Earle,

—Continued on back cover



# The Monstrous Elegance of White Supremacy

BY ALEX MIKULICH, PH.D.

“Meanwhile, racism, elegant, lovely, monstrous, carries on.” So concludes *The Atlantic* essayist Ta-Nehisi Coates in his incisive analysis of overt racism by the rancher Cliven Bundy and the owner of the Los Angeles Clippers basketball team, Donald Sterling.<sup>1</sup>

The deeper problem concerns what the heralded Canadian Jesuit theologian Bernard Lonergan describes as cultural bias. Lonergan asks: “How, indeed, is the mind to become conscious of its own bias when that bias springs from a communal flight from understanding and is supported by the whole texture of civilization?”

Drawing upon Lonergan’s work, the Roman Catholic moral theologian Bryan Massingale addresses the American “flight from understanding.” Given that American society remains steeped in white racial bias, explains Massingale, there is only so much that white Americans “can ‘see.’”

Massingale recommends that “since one cannot struggle against what one is unaware of, moral suasion is of little use in combating racial injustice. An alternate strategy of fostering liberating awareness or ‘consciousness raising,’ through moments of interruption needs to be seriously explored and developed.”<sup>2</sup>

Coates attempts to raise consciousness by interrupting the cultural bias that enables white Americans to point the finger at overt racists as we ignore our own participation in creating racial inequity.

The problem is deeper. Not only are white Americans unable to see our own racial bias, but we also tend to live by the myth that we are racially innocent. The assumption of white racial innocence is a way white Americans inoculate ourselves from racial moral responsibility.

The philosopher Barbara Applebaum unpacks the problem of how whites presume racial innocence in her study *Being White, Being Good: White Complicity, White Moral Responsibility, and Social Justice Pedagogy*. She contends that complicity ought to be the starting point for ethics.<sup>3</sup>

Complicity, argues Applebaum, is a necessary step (although not sufficient) in beginning to challenge systemic racial oppression. Her point is not only that systemic racism is often perpetuated by well-intended white people but also that being morally good may actually frustrate the recognition of moral responsibility.

Laurie Cassidy, Margaret Pfeil and I titled our book *The Scandal of White Complicity in US Hyper-Incarceration* for this very reason. Extending Applebaum’s point theologically, all people are good by the theological fact of being made in the image of God. Every person is a gift of God’s creation. Inherent in that gift is moral responsibility.

It is for this theological and practical reason that I contend that white people who may be morally upright may miss how “elegant, lovely, monstrous racism” addresses us.

Coates contends with the conundrum of bias by employing a strategy that many people of color have utilized throughout American history; not unlike the king’s jester who speaks truth to power, he mocks white supremacy in a way that exposes the myth of white American innocence.

Far more than *benefiting from* racism, as the term “privilege” connotes, *good* white Americans shape a society that disproportionately burdens people of color in every dimension of life, including health, education, wealth, income, criminal justice, and jobs.

As James Baldwin once explained, white people “have been married to the lie of white supremacy too long; the effect on their personalities, their lives, their grasp of reality, has been as devastating as the lava which so memorably immobilized the citizens of Pompeii.” Baldwin continued: “They are unable to conceive that their version of reality, which they want me to accept, is an insult to my history and a parody of theirs and an intolerable violation of myself.”<sup>4</sup>

Coates describes a brand of systemic racism more sophisticated than that demonstrated by overt racists. He notices how “elegant racism is invisible, supple, and enduring. It disguises itself in the national vocabulary, avoids epithets and didacticism.



In April 2014, Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling was banned from the NBA for life and fined \$2.5 million by the league after private recordings of him making racist comments were made public.

On March 27, 2014, legal dispute between the United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and cattle rancher Cliven Bundy in southeastern Nevada over unpaid grazing fees that developed into an armed confrontation between protesters and law enforcement. After making remarks discussing whether black people would be better off as slaves than under government subsidies, Bundy was widely condemned in the media.

Grace is the singular marker of elegant racism.”

The “grace” of this racism is how it employs lobbyists dressed in the finest suits; lives in lovely neighborhoods or suburbs with manicured lawns; and includes the most active citizens who vote for the judges, legislators, district attorneys, and policies that maintain white innocence as they criminalize blacks and blackness.<sup>5</sup>

Systemic racism endures when white Americans create separate gated housing districts with predominantly white schools whether public or private. The attractive goods of school and neighborhood choice often hide, very subtly, the ways white Americans withdraw funding and resources from cities and communities of color for schools, housing, health care, transportation, and jobs.

The elegant form of racism does not require that a white Realtor tell a black person that they cannot buy a specific property nor does it require that white people consciously seek out a white Realtor to help them find a home in a predominantly white neighborhood.

The discriminatory operations of the law, economy, and real estate render such explicit, overtly racist personal interactions unnecessary. The law places the onus on proving intentional racist intent to exclude a person from renting or buying a property, a legal measure that is extremely difficult if not impossible to demonstrate.

People need not state that “location, location, location” means “white location, white location, white location.” This supple evasion ignores the linkage between homeownership and relative valuing of whiteness over blackness when whites own a home earlier in life and gain more home equity over a lifetime than do people of color. Sophisticated racism ignores how African-American and Latino borrowers are more likely to receive sub-prime loans than white borrowers, even when studies are controlled for legitimate risk factors.<sup>6</sup> Predatory payday lenders, without any hint of racism, frequently locate their shops in the most economically vulnerable communities of color.<sup>7</sup>

Both conservatives and liberals underestimate the enduring achievements of white supremacy, explains Coates. Until good white people take shared moral responsibility for the world we create, systemic racism endures. Yet whites can take moral responsibility by praying for God’s grace and the humility to collaborate daily with other white people to unlearn our bias as we open ourselves to the wisdom of our brothers and sisters of color.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Ta-Nehisi Coates, “This Town Needs a Better Class of Racist,” *The Atlantic* (May 1, 2014) available online at [www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/05/this-town-needs-a-better-class-of-racist/361443](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/05/this-town-needs-a-better-class-of-racist/361443)
- 2 Bryan N. Massingale, “James Cone and Recent Catholic Episcopal Teaching on Racism,” *Theological Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (December 2000): p. 729.
- 3 See “White Complicity as a Way Toward Racial Solidarity,” *JustSouth Quarterly* (Winter 2013), pp. 6-7.
- 4 James Baldwin, “The Price May Be Too High,” in *The Cross of Redemption: Uncollected Writings*, Randall Kenan, ed., Pantheon Books, 2010, p. 106.
- 5 Alex Mikulich, Laurie Cassidy, and Margaret Pfeil, *The Scandal of White Complicity in US Hyper-Incarceration: A Nonviolent Spirituality of White Resistance*. (Palgrave, 2013). Chapters 1 and 2 develop the historical patterns of the relationship between white supremacy and criminalization of blackness, and chapters 3 and 4 explore the cultural roots of the criminalization of blackness.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- 7 In Texas, 75 percent of payday stores are located in communities where median income is under \$50,000 per year. See [www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/report/2013/08/20/72591/predatory-payday-lending](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/report/2013/08/20/72591/predatory-payday-lending) Interactive maps of Louisiana demonstrate payday stores located in African-American and economically vulnerable communities: [www.labudget.org/lbp/paydaylending/](http://www.labudget.org/lbp/paydaylending/)

**Jesuit Social Research Institute**  
6363 St. Charles Avenue, Box 94  
New Orleans, LA 70118-6143

(504) 864-7746  
e-mail: [jsri@loyno.edu](mailto:jsri@loyno.edu)

[loyno.edu/jsri/](http://loyno.edu/jsri/)

Connect with us!



## KIDS IN CRISIS: The surge of unaccompanied immigrant children to the border

— Continued from page 5

“The impact of migration on the well-being of transnational families: new data from sending communities in Mexico,” *Community, Work & Family*, Vol. 12, No. 1, February 2009, pp. 91-103.

11 Op. Cit., Kids in Need of Defense.

12 Op. Cit., Office of Refugee Resettlement. Sometimes the adjustment to living again with a parent the child has not seen in years can be very difficult, especially if the parent has remarried and is raising another family. Because deportation is a civil infraction, a government attorney is not provided to represent the children in deportation proceedings.

13 Over half of immigrant children are not represented by a lawyer in their immigration proceedings. Op. Cit., Kids in Need of Defense.

14 Phone interview with Michael Seifert, May 5, 2014.

15 Ibid.

16 Julia Preston, “U.S. Plans to Step Up Detention and Deportation of Migrants,” *The New York Times*, June 20, 2014.

17 See “Statement from Michelle Brané, Director of Migrant Rights & Justice Programs at Women’s Refugee Commission on today’s U.S. government decision to detain and deport migrant families,” June 20, 2014, [www.womensrefugeecommission.org/press-room/2067-wrc-reacts-to-the-us-government-announcement-that-it-will-begin-detaining-and-deporting-immigrant-families](http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/press-room/2067-wrc-reacts-to-the-us-government-announcement-that-it-will-begin-detaining-and-deporting-immigrant-families)

18 Op. Cit., Kim. It is important to note that this crisis is regional in nature. Asylum requests by Hondurans, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans seeking refuge in Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Belize increased 712 percent since 2009, according to a U.N. report. See [www.menendez.senate.gov/newsroom/press/sens-menendez-durbin-hirono-and-reps-gutierrez-and-roysbal-allard-discuss-humanitarian-and-refugee-children-crisis-at-the-border](http://www.menendez.senate.gov/newsroom/press/sens-menendez-durbin-hirono-and-reps-gutierrez-and-roysbal-allard-discuss-humanitarian-and-refugee-children-crisis-at-the-border)

*JustSouth Quarterly* one-page articles are available free at [www.loyno.edu/jsri/catholic-social-thought](http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/catholic-social-thought)

*JustSouth* is published quarterly by the Jesuit Social Research Institute, College of Social Sciences, Loyola University New Orleans, 6363 St. Charles Avenue, Box 94, New Orleans, LA 70118

The *JustSouth Monthly* is published 12 times a year and is available upon request without charge at [jsri@loyno.edu](mailto:jsri@loyno.edu). Copyright 2014 © Jesuit Social Research Institute. ISSN 2161-315X.

## THE MISSION OF THE JESUIT SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Jesuit Social Research Institute works to transform the Gulf South through action research, analysis, education, and advocacy on the core issues of poverty, race, and migration. The Institute is a collaboration of Loyola University New Orleans and the Society of Jesus rooted in the *faith that does justice*.



**JESUITS**  
New Orleans Province