



San Francisco June 4, 2020 - His Excellency Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco, and His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, regularly communicate to discuss matters of faith and the challenges of our world, but more recently they have increased their contact in the aftermath of the tragic death of George Floyd. They have shared their distress and sadness by this horrific act of violence, and how this situation has escalated civil unrest throughout our country. They have issued the following joint statement.

**Joint Statement of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco
and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco
Denouncing the Killing of George Floyd and the Ensuing Civil Unrest and Protests**

The overwhelming national response to George Floyd's death, manifested in peaceful protests, properly honors his life and denounces injustice. But sadly now, the growing acts of violence and looting underscore the ongoing systemic racism and discrimination against people of color which have become all too common in our society.

We are all ***“created in the image and likeness of God”*** (Genesis 1:27). When we bring harm to another person, it is as if we are bringing harm directly to God. The tragic death of George Floyd and the deaths that have occurred as a result of the protests have transgressed this fundamental truth. So, as Saint Basil the Great said, ***“let us stop the evil, removing the anger from our souls”*** (Homily Against Anger, 3).

The killing of George Floyd has ignited, yet again, the call for “justice for all,” not just for the privileged in our society. We pray that our elected officials, and all those entrusted with leadership positions, will hear that call. We must, once again, hear the words of the prophet Isaiah, who said, ***“Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good, seek justice, correct oppression...”*** (Isaiah 1:16) and the prophet Amos, who said, ***“But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream”*** (Amos 5:24). These words inspired our nation's most notable prophet of non-violence, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, who challenged America when he said, ***“And what is it America has failed to hear?...It has failed to hear that the promises of freedom and justice have not been met.”***

We live in a beautiful city, named for Saint Francis of Assisi, who dedicated his life to serving God through his work. He was a great lover of nature and God's creation. The

violence and current destruction in our city diminish the legacy of this saint who preached peace and lived a life of piety, poverty, and humility. Let us not only speak his words, but put them into action to restore order in our community and throughout our world: ***“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is offence, pardon. Where there is discord, union. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy.”***

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