

Pastor's Corner

Corpus Christi Sunday

What's next for our nation? Hopefully, lots of prayer.

As I write this column on Monday, June 8, George Floyd has been deceased for two weeks. We have witnessed massive protests over his brutal death nationally and internationally. We have heard cries of police brutality and systemic racism. We have seen peaceful demonstrations and destructive demonstrations. Fortunately, the demonstrations have been largely peaceful over the last couple of days.

There are calls to defund police departments, to tighten qualifications for police officers, to increase sanctions for criminal behavior by police, and to put more resources into education and job opportunities for minority communities.

On Friday afternoon, June 5, I participated in a Prayer March for an end to racism and a restoration of peace sponsored by the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Several hundred people walked from the Archdiocese Chancery Office to the steps of Notre Dame Seminary. Archbishop Aymond and Bishop Cheri addressed the group. We prayed for God's guidance and help on these issues and for forgiveness for any way in which we personally have contributed to the problem.

Later that evening, we had a Holy Hour of prayer at St. Francis Church attended by more than 100 people. We prayed for protection from the tropical storm, and for God's help and healing on the challenging issues of racism and violence.

Honestly, the best that I have felt about our nation in the past two weeks was when I prayed at the prayer gatherings that day. Others who attended said the same thing.

What is the next step for our country as we face the issues of racism and violence? I hope it is lots and lots of prayer. Oh, I understand legislators will be proposing laws and monetary solutions, but hopefully it is clear that unless we all turn to God and experience conversion of mind and heart, these problems will never improve significantly. We need the God who loves each of us so much that He created us in his image and likeness.

As people of faith, the greatest contribution we can make at this time is prayer. The next greatest contribution we can make is to reach out to someone ethnically different than us through an act of charity or love. If someone expresses anger, worry or some other emotion about these issues, ask them if they are praying. Direct them to the Archdiocese Family Prayer because God is ready and waiting to help.

God bless,
Fr. Joe