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Statement from Bishop David Zubik on Racial Healing

Given all that is transpiring around us and within us, I ask that you ponder the following:

“OPEN WIDE OUR HEARTS”: THE ENDURING CALL TO LOVE

This has been a tough week. Since the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis at the beginning of last week, we have been confronted again with a number of ugly issues, perhaps the most notable of all the sin of racism. Given the violence which we witnessed in Pittsburgh these past days and the escalating tensions in many major cities throughout the United States, we continue our prayers for peace and calm in the midst of ongoing violent protests following the death of George Floyd.

In 2018, we bishops in the United States released a pastoral letter entitled “Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love—A Pastoral Letter Against Racism.” I can think of no better time than now for us to use any opportunity that comes our way to read and reflect on an issue that is as ugly as racism. This is truly a time for us to recognize the effects of that sin, which are stunningly evident in our streets and in our news stories. It is equally important for us to search our hearts to see if that sin is within us.

If you do not have a copy of the letter, you may retrieve it at the following: <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/open-wide-our-hearts.pdf>.

PRAYER FOR RACIAL HEALING

Evil such as we are witnessing these days can only be overcome by prayer. At this most critical time in the history of our country and our towns and cities, I ask that each one of you join with me as we focus on the absolute necessity of praying to God for guidance, courage and the vision that tears down walls and helps to build bridges.

Might I suggest that beginning immediately we join together in the following prayer, from *For The Love of One Another* (1989), a special message from the Bishops' Committee on Black Catholics of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Pastoral Letter, *Brothers and Sisters to Us*, the U.S. Catholic bishops' Pastoral Letter on Racism (1979).

Wake Me Up, Lord

Wake me up Lord so that the evil of racism finds no home within me.

Keep watch over my heart Lord and remove from me any barriers to your grace.

Fill my spirit Lord so that I may give services of justice and peace.

Clear my mind Lord and use it for your glory.

And finally, remind me Lord that you said, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God.”

Amen.