

Dear Principals, Pastoral Leaders, and Pastoral Ministers,

We are compelled to send a letter in response to the recent killing of George Floyd (and many others) and the resulting protests seeking an end to institutional racism. Our hearts break, along with yours, for the longstanding pain suffered by black and brown people in America.

“These deaths are tragic, and they expose a symptomatic and deep-seated connection between institutional racism and the continued erosion of the sanctity of life. If we do not respond appropriately as a society, we will be tacitly acquiescing to the ongoing killing of unarmed black men.”

--Archbishop Paul Etienne, Archbishop of Seattle

The Church draws a clear line concerning the sin of racism, as indicated in [Open Wide Our hearts: The Enduring Call to Love](#), a pastoral letter from the U.S. Bishops.

“Racism is not a thing of the past or simply a throwaway political issue to be bandied about when convenient. It is a real and present danger that must be met head on. People of good conscience must never turn a blind eye when citizens are being deprived of their human dignity and even their lives. Indifference is not an option. As bishops, we unequivocally state that racism is a life issue.”

--U.S. Bishop Chairmen

In this moment of unspeakable tragedy, there also lies incredible opportunities to collectively unite, mobilize, advocate, speak out, and educate others and ourselves. However, for many of us, we do not know how to start the conversation or what actions to take.

The Church stands ready to assist you. Please review the accompanying resources, which can help guide your response efforts with those you serve. If you need more, please feel free to contact our various offices for additional support.

As Catholics, we simply cannot stand by and not respond to incidents of racism and inhuman treatment of our black and brown brothers and sisters. Let us harness this unique moment to usher God’s Kingdom of Heaven into being, especially for people of color who are hurting so deeply and in need of healing.

In The Heart of Christ,

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Online Resource List

- **Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love** (USCCB): <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/open-wide-our-hearts.pdf>
- **5 Lessons from the Pastoral Letter on Racism:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GzNELtwDlc&feature=youtu.be>
- **Prayer to Overcome Racism** (USCCB): <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/Prayer-to-Overcome-Racism.pdf>
- **Combatting Racism Resource Page** (USCCB): <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/index.cfm>
- **Combatting Racism Resources for School Teachers** (USCCB): <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/educational-resources-on-racism.cfm>
- **A Call to Address Racism In Our Hearts and Community** (Archbishop Etienne): <http://www.seattlarchdiocese.org/Assets/General/AB-Etienne-Statementon-on-Racism-052020.pdf>
- **Statement of U.S. Bishop Chairmen in Wake of Death of George Floyd and National Protests** (USCCB): <http://usccb.org/news/2020/20-83.cfm>
- **Statement of U.S. Bishops' President on George Floyd and the Protests in American Cities** (USCCB): <http://usccb.org/news/2020/20-84.cfm>
- **Catholic Prison Ministries Coalition Resource Page:** <https://www.catholicprisonministries.org/#BLM>
- **Racism in Our Streets and Structures Resource Page:** https://catholicsocialthought.georgetown.edu/events/racism-in-our-streets-and-structures?fbclid=IwAR31hE2ZWkKm5YTz2iME3MHI4k1d3acMHV_ogBgTKnUqmbzRzCrK2hbZDk8
- **Pope Francis and U.S. Bishops Respond to George Floyd's Killing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyztKEa6SCc&feature=youtu.be&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=871e1ad4-8276-4240-81e7-86dbe0b92829>

- **Stations of the Cross: Overcoming Racism** (USCCB):
http://www.usccb.org/cs_upload/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/304006_2.pdf
- **Catholic Study Guide for the film, Just Mercy** (Catholic Mobilizing Network):
<https://catholicmobilizing.org/just-mercy-catholic-study-guide>

Hard Copy Resource List

To acquire copies, please contact Annie Bailey at (206) 274-3194 or ana.bailey@seattlearch.org

- Four-Session Process for Faith Communities on the USCCB Pastoral Letter on Racism (Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center)
- Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers (USCCB)
- Unity in Diversity: A Scriptural Rosary (USCCB)
- The Gospel of Joy in America (Hosffman Ospino)
- La Alegria del Evangelio en Los Estados Unidos (Hosffman Ospino)
- Fr. Augustus Tolton: The First Recognized Black Catholic Priest in America
- In My Own Words (Thea Bowman)
- Two Rivers: A Report on Catholic Native American Culture and Ministry (USCCB)
- Saint Kateri Tekakwitha: Courageous Faith (Lillian Fisher)
- Encountering Christ in Harmony: A Pastoral Response to Our Asian and Pacific Island Brothers and Sisters (USCCB)