

## **A Call for Anti-Racist Transformation in the United States**

Maryknoll missionaries mourn the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and all those who have lost their lives as a result of the sin of racism. Our faith is rooted in the belief that every person is made in the image and likeness of the Creator, and thus equally deserving of dignity and respect. We join Pope Francis in saying we cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life. We abhor the violation of life that racism represents.

Seeing the video of the killing of Mr. Floyd, and other videos of killings, beatings, and harassment of black and brown people by police and others who benefit from white privilege has made us all witnesses to the persistent sin of racism that resides within hearts and distorts social structures in the United States. We stand in solidarity with our suffering black and brown brothers and sisters who live in fear due to systemic violence, and with all those expressing grief and outrage, who feel their voices are not heard. We echo their cry of Black Lives Matter and their call for justice, to reverse the power of the state used against people of color.

Mr. Floyd's tragic death occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has revealed stark truths about systematic racial inequality in the United States, as black and brown deaths skyrocket and economic devastation in black communities teeters on depression. It is painfully clear that the United States has never fully atoned for its original sin of slavery and the proceeding century of racial discrimination in law and in culture.

Both the [1968 Kerner Commission report](#) and the [50-year update](#) by the Eisenhower Foundation say deepening racial division is not inevitable. “[The] alternative will require a commitment to national action,” the original report said, “compassionate, massive and sustained, backed by the resources of the most powerful and the richest nation on this earth. From every American it will require new attitudes, new understanding, and, above all, new will.”

We see the righteous anger and courage of the millions of people demonstrating in the streets across all 50 states – people of all races, ethnicities, and ages – and we feel a spark of hope. We pray that this is the birth of the new will needed to transform ourselves and our society. Together we say his name – George Floyd! Black Lives Matter.

**Maryknoll Sisters**

**Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers**

**Maryknoll Lay Missioners**

2020