



PRESS RELEASE

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Statement from Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone regarding the death of George Floyd and rioting in our communities

CHARLESTON, SC - The Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmone, Bishop of Charleston, released the following statement in the wake of the death of George Floyd and the riots occurring across our country:

“The Catholic Church of South Carolina grieves with our community about the events leading up to these riots taking place around our state and our country. We acknowledge the hurt of the African American community. We pray for those who have been harmed, and that the anger and frustration be lessened with time and reflection. We must step back and learn from history that these vengeful mobs do nothing but elicit a flash of negative attention resulting in resentful distraction from a cause that requires systemic change.

“To our family in Christ, we cannot minimize the fact that there is blatant racism and injustice in our country, and change must come. In order to make that change, however, we must unite in our efforts. There is no other way, but peace. Peace is an ethic for people of all faiths. We know that over 2000 years ago the authors of the Bible recorded the accounts of a man who changed the world. Jesus Christ did not do so, however, by commanding armies, and engaging in warfare. He taught his followers about love and mercy; that we must love God first and we must love our neighbors as ourselves. Christians are called to follow those teachings today and to sacrifice the ways that impede love and mercy. We must sacrifice our prejudices, ignorance, hostility, apathy, and all that halts us from truly loving our neighbors as ourselves.

“In the days ahead, I urge all people to refrain from bickering in social media, and step away from petty arguments. We need to join in solidarity and seek reconciliation as we continue to heal from injustice in our society. Opinions and misinformation are not the answer to our problems. Prayer is. Education is. Empathy is.

“Young people, I call on you to take the lead and show us how to effect change. Take Our Lord’s message of mercy out into the streets and show people how to welcome it into their hearts and homes. Show the world what it is to change the world peacefully through reason and open communication, by linking arms and teaching us to love God first.

“Let us pray for George Floyd and his family. Let us pray for those who are victims of racism. Let us pray for those who are suffering because of the riots. Let us pray for peace, justice and respect for all life.”

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