



DIOCESE OF  
SAN JOSE

**OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

I echo the statement issued today by the US Bishops in the wake of the death of George Floyd: “We are broken-hearted, sickened, and outraged to watch another video of an African American man being killed before our eyes.” The senseless taking of life defies the fundamental principle of justice and respect for human life. We must recognize the fact that all lives are sacred. As Catholics, it is not enough to relegate our concern to only thoughts and prayers. Our church, at every level, must speak out unequivocally and work against the sin of racism.

As the US Bishops stated in their recent pastoral letter against racism, “**Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love,**” people of good will must never turn a blind eye when citizens are being deprived of their human dignity and even their lives. Indifference is not an option. They state: “It is not a secret that... attacks on human life have severely affected people of color, who are disproportionately affected by poverty, targeted for abortion, have less access to healthcare, have the greatest numbers on death row, and are most likely to feel pressure to end their lives when facing serious illness. As bishops, we unequivocally state that racism is a life issue” (p. 30).

We plead for an end to the violence in the wake of this tragedy. We support peaceful, non-violent protests and stand in support of those understandably outraged. We pray for comfort for all grieving families and friends. We applaud the majority of law enforcement officers who follow lawful protocol and demonstrate appropriate restraint, often in the face of threats.

As we approach the Feast of Pentecost, we plead for the strength and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. “With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this wellspring of strength and courage must move us to act. Consequently, we all need to take responsibility for correcting the injustices of racism and healing the harms it has caused” (“Open Wide our Hearts,” p. 23). We challenge everyone, especially those from different cultural backgrounds, to come together peacefully to work toward a society where justice, peace, and charity may be shared by children of the same Creator.

+Oscar Cantú  
Bishop of San Jose