



Dear Friends in Christ,

As Vicar General of Urban Ministry for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, I want the good people of our city, and of the entire Archdiocese, to know that we unequivocally stand with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in condemning the violence and hatred playing out at a gathering of white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia. Just as the U.S. bishops “stand with all who are oppressed by evil ideology” and “stand ready to work with all people of goodwill for an end to racial violence and for the building of peace in our communities” (Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops), we in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee stand strong with our brothers and sisters too long oppressed not only in Virginia, but in our own urban center. We have zero tolerance for any racist words or actions. They are not only incendiary, but are rooted in a hate that is diametrically opposed to the love and light of Jesus Christ. Racism is a grave sin. As the Bishops note, it is “not merely one sin among many; it is a radical evil that divides the human family and denies the new creation of a redeemed world. To struggle against it demands an equally radical transformation, in our own minds and hearts as well as in the structure of our society (Brothers and Sisters to Us - *U.S. Catholic Bishops Pastoral Letter on Racism 1979*).”

This is an open invitation to begin reconciliation with prayer. Please come to the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist this Friday to pray for Reconciliation and the Healing of Racism in Milwaukee. We have been gathering for several months every Friday at 12:15 p.m. for a half hour of prayer. We really need you to join us. Without question, **the time is now**. We must atone for our transgressions and we must heal and move forward to work together for a more just and equitable community. The Catholic Church has many wonderful programs that address poverty and injustice in the city of Milwaukee — but we can, and will, do more. For, if we do not, we will lose the battle against this personal and systemic evil, and in turn fail to bring about the radical transformation necessary to build the Kingdom. We can and we must do this. **The time is now.**

In Christ,

Fr. Tim Kitzke
Vicar General for Urban Ministry
Archdiocese of Milwaukee

For additional information, see the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops pastoral letter on racial justice at this link: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/african-american/resources/brothers-and-sisters-to-us-bishops-pastoral-statements-on-racism.cfm>