

THE BOWMAN-FRANCIS MINISTRY TEAM



JOINT STATEMENT ON THE **BLACK LIVES MATTER** **MOVEMENT** AND **BLACK CATHOLIC** **RESPONSIBILITY**

Issued 6-19-2020

THIS STATEMENT WAS
ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION
WITH:

THE BOWMAN-FRANCIS
MINISTRY,

THE NATIONAL BLACK
CATHOLIC CLERGY CAUCUS,

THE NATIONAL BLACK
SISTERS CONFERENCE, THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF BLACK CATHOLIC
ADMINISTRATORS,

AND

THE INSTITUTE FOR BLACK
CATHOLIC STUDIES
AT XAVIER UNIVERSITY

Recently there have been a number of US Catholic Cardinals, Bishops and Priests who have openly denounced support of the Black Lives Matter movement. It seems they equate the movement with Black Lives Matter Foundation, Inc., the global organization whose beliefs they state are in conflict with those of the Roman Catholic Church.

Pope Francis, in his general audience dated 6-3-2020 in response to the killing of George Floyd, said to the English speaking faith community, *"... 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."*

Fundamental to catholic social teaching is that each life has its God-given dignity and is sacred. Therefore, Black Lives Matter is a Pro-Life issue. St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthians that we are the Body of Christ. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. *(1 Cor 12:26)*

The Black Lives Matter movement began as a cry to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the 2012 shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed black teen. Since then there have been several high-profile murders of unarmed, defenseless black men and women, where the perpetrators were white and/or law enforcement.

The Black Lives Matter movement brings to light the inequitable treatment of blacks by those in authority. As black Catholics we ask that our church develop pastoral and political strategies that address the systematic racism and oppression of Black people in this country.

As tithing members of the church who support our respective diocesan financial initiatives, we want to hear the BODY OF CHRIST say it believes in the right to life of Black people from the womb to the tomb. And that this BODY OF CHRIST recognizes the importance of a FIRM STAND against racial injustice and police brutality across the Black Diaspora.

WE, the BOWMAN-FRANCIS MINISTRY TEAM along with Deacon Melvin Tardy, President of The National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, Sr. Josita Colbert, President & Sr. Roberta Fulton, President Emeritus of The National Black Sisters Conference, Pamela Harris, President from The National Association of Black Catholic Administrators and Kathleen Dorsey Bellow, Director of The Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University STAND with the BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT!

WE, the BOWMAN-FRANCIS MINISTRY TEAM and all of its members and entities proudly and unequivocally proclaim that BLACK LIVES MATTER! For the murders of 14-year-old Emmitt Till, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Elijah McClain, Rayshard Brooks, Atatiana Jefferson and the countless others that have not been publicized...

WE PRAY THAT THEIR FAMILIES RECEIVE JUSTICE.

The Bowman-Francis Ministry Team 