



Sisters of Saint Joseph

U.S. FEDERATION

United in Mission – Loving God and Neighbor

The U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph strongly condemns the police-killing of another black man on the streets of our nation. Our hearts are breaking as we mourn with the family and friends of George Floyd, as well as Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, David McAtee, and all the others who have lost loved ones to law enforcement violence. The continued killing of black people; the constant harassment of people of color; and the denial of the rights and dignity of our black American neighbors must end now.

Racism is America's original sin. It is a virus every bit as deadly as COVID-19 that has infected our nation since its inception and until we address it, people of color will continue to die, and our nation will never heal. Racism, whether the institutional racism which privileges some at the expense others or the daily acts of microaggressions, hate, and discrimination diminishes us all.

The resilience and well-being of humanity depends upon us dismantling these systemic, structural, and cultural realities of white supremacy, endemic to the fabric of our country. We commit ourselves to the creation of the "One Sacred Community," where all people are treated as the sacred creation that they are. Racism denies that most profound truth, that all of us are created in God's image and each of us is entitled to dignity and respect.

As women religious and their partners in mission, we acknowledge our own complicity in institutional racism. We pray for our nation's healing, yet we know that is not enough. We ask forgiveness of people of color – without expecting or requiring it – to move into action. It is time for bold, decisive action – it is long past time to dismantle white privilege and rededicate ourselves to building God's beloved community.

As a Federation, we vow to turn our words into precise actions addressing the institutional racism that lives within our institutions and within ourselves. We vow to support criminal justice reforms, including a call for independent bodies that conduct investigations of police misconduct and broad, sweeping reforms to policing, incarceration, and the judicial system. As part of the reconciliation for the death of George Floyd, we urge Hennepin County Attorney, Mike Freeman, to pledge a just and timely adjudication of this tragedy.

We call on the people of the United States to work with greater urgency to eliminate the systemic racism that infects the very soul of our nation. For the U.S. Federation, that requires us looking at all of our institutions and introducing guidelines to ensure that we are working to a more just society. This includes an honest look at the hiring and promotion practices at all levels, including the Federation, congregations, our schools, hospitals, and ministries.

As we continue to work to dismantle institutional racism, we are all asked to do the deep, ongoing inner work that anti-racism requires of us. This includes listening to, learning from, supporting, and elevating the black voices from within our sisters, partners in mission, and more broadly.

We ask God's blessing on the struggle that lies ahead. We, as a Federation and as individuals, must do better.

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The U.S. Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph is a dynamic union of all the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the United States who claim a common origin in the foundation at LePuy, France in 1650. Today there are approximately 3,740 vowed members as well as 2,609 associates and 34 agrégées in the United States. Worldwide there are over 10,749 Sisters of Saint Joseph and 4,399 associates in over 50 countries.