**Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love**

a pastoral letter against racism

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

**Prayers of the Faithful Against Racism**

**For our Church,** that we may celebrate and welcome the diverse faces of Christ in our community, our worship, our ministries, and our leaders, let us pray to the Lord.

**For world leaders,** that they may work to end the violence perpetrated by verbal attacks, deadly weapons, and cold indifference. May our nation and countries around the world become havens of peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**For our community,** that we may receive the grace to see every human being as a child of God, regardless of race, language, or culture, let us pray to the Lord.

**For parents and educators,**that we may teach our children how to resolve differences non-violently and respectfully and have the courage to model it in our own behavior, let us pray to the Lord.

**For this faith community,**that we may hear the call of our leaders in the new Pastoral Letter against Racism to respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit to act together to end violence and racism, let us pray to the Lord.

**For our public officials,**that the Spirit of Wisdom may help them strive to work for equal education, suitable housing, and equal employment opportunities for all, let us pray to the Lord.

**For solidarity in our global human family,** that we may be vigilant in our protection of those who are most vulnerable and most in need, let us pray to the Lord.

**For those who have died,**especially those who have died in the pursuit of justice, may they be welcomed into the great glory of God’s love, let us pray to the Lord.

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**Prayer to Address the Sin of Racism**

 We pray for healing to address
The persistent sin of racism
Which rejects the full humanity
Of some of your children,
And the talents and potential You have given.

We pray for the grace to recognize
The systems that do not support
The dignity of every person,
That do not promote respect
For those who are seen as other,
Who bear the legacy of centuries
Of discrimination, fear, and violence.

We pray for graced structures
So children of color in Flint, and all children,
Have access to clean water and health care.

We pray for graced structures
So children of color in Mississippi, and all children,
Have quality education that will allow them to develop their gifts.

We pray for graced structures
So children of color in Camden, and all children,
Have homes where families can live in dignity and security.

We pray for graced structures
So children of color in Chicago, and all children,
Can grow up without fear, without the sound of gunshots.
Lord of all, we ask you to hear and answer our prayers.
Give us eyes to see how the past
Has shaped the complex present,
And to perceive how we must create
A new way forward,
With a new sense of community
That embraces and celebrates
The rich diversity of all,
That helps us live out your call to reject
The sin of racism, the stain of hate,
And to seek a compassionate solidarity
Supported by Your grace and Your love.  We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

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