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*Statement regarding the death of Mr. Daniel Prude
and renewing the plea for prayer and peace throughout the United States
September 3, 2020*

At each Mass, we pray, “Lord, Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will.” How elusive seems the peace and unity of Christ in our world today. We continue to carry very heavy crosses, exacerbated by the challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic, as throughout our nation, individuals and groups of people are seen in opposition to each other rather than as sisters and brothers, who have one Maker and Father and therefore, equal in dignity, made in God’s image and likeness.

The recent news of the tragic death of Mr. Daniel Prude and the visible pain of his family cause a deep sorrow in the hearts of all. We pray for the repose of his soul and the consolation of his family and friends. At the same time, we cannot cease yearning for peace, justice and truth in our land, where with the help of those dedicated to preserving our freedom and protecting us from all harm, we will achieve true and lasting peace and there are no acts of inhumanity among God’s children so contrary to His will that we love one another.

During his Wednesday Audience on September 2, 2020, Pope Francis said, “Solidarity today is the road to living in a post-pandemic world, toward the healing of our interpersonal and social sicknesses. There is no other option: either we move forward along the road of solidarity, or things will get worse.” Authentic, Christian solidarity is not an emotion or fleeting compassion at the terrible misfortunes of another, rather it is “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.” (Pope Saint John Paul II, On Social Concern [*Sollicitudo rei Socialis*], no. 38).

Committed to this reality, we continue to pray and work together for a more just society, where tensions are able to be reduced, where conflicts can be settled, where peace prevails, where life is sacred and revered, and where the virtues of the Gospel reconcile us to one another and to the Father. May God bless our efforts so all may know the peace and unity of Christ.

+ *Salvatore R. Matano*
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