



## A Message from our Director, Father Charles Dahm

This past week, we have witnessed so much anger and pain sparked by the brutal and senseless killing of George Floyd. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends. His brutal murder represents another blatant and unjust attack by police and a criminal justice system that has oppressed people of color for centuries. The murder is another example of our country's history of institutional racism that cries out for justice.

We support peaceful protest against the grave injustices inflicted on people of color. We are saddened that too often they are overshadowed by violence, whether by a small number of protesters or by the police themselves. This response is clearly a consequence of centuries of racial discrimination and abuse. We must not allow the violence to distract us from focusing on the injustice of institutional racism. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. chose the path of nonviolence, recognizing that violence breeds violence. Let us follow his advice: "The nonviolent resister is willing to accept violence if necessary, but never to inflict it."

The severe inequalities experienced by communities of color, whether in housing, education, employment, health, or criminal justice, must end. It is not enough to have empathy for those who suffer injustice and even hatred. We must take action to right the wrongs of the past. Our efforts to reform the police and the criminal justice system, as well as, all other systems that have oppressed people of color, are the best way we can honor the memory of George Floyd.

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