

# Statement of the Salesians of Don Bosco USA West

*Love compels each of us to resist racism courageously.*

*It requires us to reach out generously to the victims of this evil, to assist the conversion needed in those who still harbor racism, and to begin to change policies and structures that allow racism to persist.*

*-- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Open Our Hearts*

Together with lay educators and ministers who share our mission, the Salesians of Don Bosco USA West condemn all forms of racism.

We are outraged by the horrific actions, the intolerable violations of human dignity, and the loss of human life that have occurred these past few weeks by yet another African American brother and sister only goes to show the sin of racism still exists in our country.

Like our founder, St. John Bosco, we educate and accompany young people who oftentimes find themselves marginalized from society with no voice to be heard. The faces of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Christian Cooper and many more before them are reflected in our students, their families, and our colleagues. We have heard similar stories. We have seen how racism has ravaged the fabric of our community. As St. John Bosco never stood by idly, we too can no longer turn a blind eye. We cannot remain on the sidelines, indifferent and silent. Respect for the lives of all young people, their families, and our colleagues call us to action.

We challenge our community and government leaders to set aside differences and work to enact laws, policies, and structures that will bring about true healing and systemic change.

We affirm our commitment to educate young people to be agents of dialogue and protagonists in creating a more just society.

We stand in solidarity with all people of color who are unjustly persecuted and suffer ethnic and racial discrimination that all too often are expressed through violence.

We hear the passionate cry of our sisters and brothers who are frustrated and outraged. We join them in their prayer and non-violent protest in helping us understand and recognize that we need fair and just solutions to the atrocities that deny basic human dignity.

We share in the grief and pray for the lives that have been lost and consolation for the families who mourn their deaths.

We continue to listen and learn in order to celebrate the richness of our diverse communities and seek reconciliation when we have failed to recognize our part in perpetuating the pain of racism.

We believe racism is a life issue. Guided by the Gospel and our Catholic Social Teaching, we renew our commitment to work tirelessly together in uplifting the voices and the lives of those on the margins; seeking ways to better amplify the stories, experiences, and perspectives of all of our brothers and sisters. Advocacy on behalf of the disenfranchised, especially the young, is integral to our way of ministry, education, and spirituality. United hand in hand, regardless of our walk of life or faith, we stand together against oppression, especially during these times of difficulty.



May 31, 2020, Solemnity of Pentecost