

June 18, 2020

To the CTU Community:

JUNETEENTH

This Friday we mark Juneteenth. It is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Although the Emancipation Proclamation became official on January 1, 1863, it was only two years later, on June 19, 1865, that Union troops were finally able to enforce this proclamation in Texas. We sadly acknowledge that freedom and equality continued to be denied *de facto* and we join with Black Lives Matter to pledge to speak out against the continuing evil of white supremacy. Following is a statement against racism, composed by the members of the Leadership Council of CTU.

CTU STATEMENT AGAINST RACISM, PREJUDICE AND INJUSTICE

Catholic Theological Union feels compelled to add its voice to those of many of our sisters and brothers and protest any and all acts of racism, prejudice and injustice toward any of God's children. The inherent and inalienable dignity endowed by God on every person demands that we protest acts of violence toward any of our sisters and brothers. The history of slavery, the slave trade, and systemic racism that are a part of our history in the United States call out for redress.

We remember the document, "Justice in the World," from the 1971 Synod of Bishops, Second General Assembly where we find the powerful statement, "Action on behalf of justice is constitutive of preaching the Gospel." Thus, we are compelled as People of God to move beyond statements to action. As a Catholic institution, we must denounce the evil of racism, which is endemic in our society, in our Church and in ourselves. At the same time, we are called to build a new society, a society of the beloved community envisioned by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that offers peace and justice to everyone. In the words of St. Vincent DePaul, "Let us love God, but let us love God by the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brow."

So, we denounce the more than four hundred years of racial hatred directed at our black brothers and sisters and manifested in thought, word and action. We denounce a hatred that has denied justice, full participation in society and access to the opportunities that lead to authentic human flourishing. We commit ourselves to do more to deconstruct racial hatred and racial violence wherever we find it, including in ourselves, and so we at CTU pledge to fight systemic racism in all our endeavors as a learning community: addressing it in our student orientation and formation programs, in faculty meetings and workshops, in our curricular offerings, and in our common prayer and liturgies.



Mark R Francis, CSV
President