



June 3, 2020

**Bishop Joseph M. Siegel statement
on the death of George Floyd and national protests**

“The Catholic Community of southwestern Indiana joins with our brothers and sisters in the United States and around the world in offering our prayerful condolences and our heartfelt sympathy to the family and loved ones of George Floyd. We are angered and grieved by the senseless brutality that brought about his death. Acts of violence, hatred and indifference against any person cannot and must not be tolerated, and we must never cease in our efforts to eradicate the evil of racism from our society. We stand in solidarity with those who have suffered the effects of racial bigotry and prejudice.

“We are called to respect the dignity of human life inherent in each person. All of us are brothers and sisters made in the image and likeness of God. The truth that all are God’s children must be the foundation of our relationships as a people, as well as our efforts to create real and effective change in our nation. We have all fallen short at one time or another in showing this respect for others, and we must strive to do better; not just in this moment of crisis, but going forward as well.

“Over the past week, we have witnessed many peaceful and powerful gatherings that have both protested the death of Mr. Floyd and others, and called us all to strive to reform unjust practices and policies that victimize the vulnerable. As a community, we need to listen, try to understand one another and begin working together toward the true justice, peace and unity we all hope and pray for.

“It is regrettable that these efforts have been undermined by the rioting and other acts of violence that have occurred in cities in our state and across our nation. Vandalism and looting do not help anyone’s cause; instead, they continue the cycle of suspicion, fear and hatred that rips at the heart of our common humanity. None of this represents the answers we seek, and none of it reflects the world we seek.

“We pray for Mr. Floyd and for everyone who has been killed or injured as a result of racial hatred. We also pray for those who have suffered due to the rioting and criminal behavior. Let us also remember the many faithful members of law enforcement who daily risk their lives to protect their fellow citizens.

“I ask our priests to include a petition at Mass for an end to racial injustice and to offer in the near future a “Mass for the Preservation of Peace and Justice.” May we all fervently implore God for the healing our broken society so desperately needs.

“Mary, Mother of God and Queen of Peace, pray for us.”