



5.31.2020

**Pentecost statement on racism from Bishop Lawrence Persico**

On this Pentecost Sunday, we pray that the Holy Spirit enlighten the hearts and minds of all people to see that racism in all forms is an evil.

We should not be surprised by the riots that have taken place across the country, as well as here in the city of Erie. I do not condone violence in any form. But the outrage being expressed is the result of decades of oppression and injustice.

It is my hope that churches, synagogues and mosques in northwest Pennsylvania can find meaningful ways to collaborate, bringing about real change in our region. People from every background and culture deserve a voice and opportunity. It will not happen unless we work together.

I support the powerful statement made by the bishops of the United States, which says, in part, that racism is not a thing of the past or simply a throwaway political issue to be bandied about when convenient.

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“It is a real and present danger that must be met head on,” they write. “As members of the church, we must stand for the more difficult right and just actions instead of the easy wrongs of indifference. We cannot turn a blind eye to these atrocities and yet still try to profess to respect every human life. We serve a God of love, mercy, and justice.

Too many communities around this country feel their voices are not being heard, their complaints about racist treatment are unheeded, and we are not doing enough to point out that this deadly treatment is antithetical to the Gospel of Life.”

We have much work to do. Let us begin by praying in earnest that the Holy Spirit give us the eyes to see, the ears to hear and the voice we need to speak the truth.

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