



## George Floyd Anniversary Prayer Service

May 25, 2021

### INTRODUCTION

**LEADER:** We gather today on this solemn anniversary of George Floyd's murder **to remember** and **to pray**.

**We remember** George Floyd, who woke up the morning of May 25, 2020 and was dead by nightfall.

**We pray** for George and his family and recall the truth spoken by his 6-year old daughter, Gianna when she proclaimed, *"My daddy changed the world."* George's death opened the eyes and hearts of the world to centuries of racial injustice.

**We remember** George's final words: *"Mama, I'm through."* Like Jesus, who remembered his mother before crying out, *"It is finished"*, both men knew their lives had been taken prematurely and unjustly as they surrendered their spirits.

**We pray** for all mothers and families who have lost loved ones due to the violence of society. Today, we pray especially for those who have died by the hands, knees, and weapons of those officers who pledged to protect them.

**We remember** the 181 people of color who have been killed since the murder of George Floyd, as well as all who have lost their lives by racist individuals and law enforcement officers.

**We pray** for safety for the good police officers and first responders who risk their lives daily to protect communities from gang violence, drug and human trafficking, abuse, and other crimes common to poverty-stricken neighborhoods that suffer due to unjust laws and policies.

**We remember** the 421 police officers who were killed in the line of duty in 2020 and 134 in 2021, and all who died before that.

**We pray** for their families and pledge to honor their sacrifices and memories with our activism and work for systemic justice and peace.

**We remember** our ignorance on May 25, 2020 and commit ourselves to lifelong learning and reparation for our sins and the sins of society as we learn about centuries of racist laws, policies, and actions in need of restorative justice.

**We pray** for grace, forgiveness, and a discomfort with our privilege that moves us to work tirelessly to end systemic racism. May the Holy Spirit open our minds and hearts to live and love as Jesus did.

**LEADER:** The Washington Post has recorded every fatal shooting in the United States by a police officer in the line of duty since Jan. 1, 2015. As we continue to learn, let us hold these “breath-taking” statistics in our hearts.



- Although half of the people shot and killed by police are White, Black Americans are shot at a disproportionate rate.
  - They account for less than 13% of the U.S. population, but are killed by police at more than twice the rate of White Americans and represented 27% of all police deaths last year.
  - Hispanic Americans comprised 21% of those killed and are 17% of the population.
  - Black and Hispanic Americans stand out because they are less likely to be armed or threatening to police when compared to white victims. (Police shootings database 2015-2021 - Washington Post)  
<https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/nation/2021/05/23/after-george-floyd-police-killings-2020-and-2021-hurt-many-more/4928193001/>
- Of the 1,127 police killings recorded in 2020, only 16 cases, or about 1.4 percent, resulted in a charge against the offending officer. Of the 16 officers, 14 had previously shot or killed someone.
  - Out of 9,170 recorded police killings from 2013 to 2021, 153 police officers (1.7 percent) were charged with a crime and 38 (0.4 percent) were convicted.
- In 47 of the 50 largest U.S. cities, police killed Black people at higher rates than white people.
  - In Chicago, police kill Black people at a rate 22 times more than that for white people.
  - In Miami, racial disparities could not be calculated because every person killed by the city's police department was Black or brown.
- To date, 319 people have been killed by police in 2021. Despite the renewed push for law enforcement changes, data from Mapping Police Violence shows that police are still killing at rates similar to past years.

- According to the Los Angeles Times, about 1 in 1,000 black men and boys in America can expect to die at the hands of police. That makes them 2.5 times more likely than white men and boys to die during a police encounter.
  - The death of a black man or boy by a police officer ranks #7, behind assault, accidents, suicide, heart disease, cancer, and HIV. Getting shot by police is a leading cause of death for U.S. black men - Los Angeles Times (latimes.com)

**LEADER:** These statistics are yet another wake-up call telling us that there is still much work to be done. ***One Year, What's Changed?*** is the theme the Floyd family has chosen for George's celebration of life today. So, what has changed?

### **In our Nation, we wait for the passage of the**

### **George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021**

In June 2020, Democrats in Congress introduced the Justice in Policing Act of 2020, a police reform and accountability bill that contains measures to combat police misconduct, excessive force, and racial bias in policing. The bill includes several provisions which aim to improve oversight, accountability, training, and documentation while placing restrictions on techniques like chokeholds and use of deadly force. After being re-worked, it passed the House on a nearly-party line vote of 220–212 on March 3, 2021. Though President Biden was hoping to sign it today, it is stalled in the Senate.

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

## **Ending Qualified Immunity Act**

The Ending Qualified Immunity Act is a police reform bill passed in the United States House of Representatives (largely along party lines) on March 4, 2021. It would remove the judicial doctrine of qualified immunity that protects law enforcement personnel from being held personally responsible for violating the rights of citizens. The bill has the support of the populous but requires 60 Senators to approve it. State and local governments are already moving to abolish qualified immunity.

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

**Around the country,** numerous cities in 25 states and the District of Columbia are not waiting on elected officials and have introduced reforms to counter excessive use of police force and lack of accountability.

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

Statues of racist slave holders are being taken down. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), 94 of the Confederate symbols removed in 2020 were monuments, compared to 54 monuments removed between 2015 and 2019. The SPLC found 2,100 public Confederate symbols remain, 704 of them monuments.

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

Cities are changing street names and recognizing their racist history. On June 30, 2020, the Kansas City Missouri Parks Board voted unanimously to strike JC Nichols' name from the JC Nichols fountain and parkway so as not to memorialize a man whose use of racial deed restrictions was seen as doing much to create Kansas City's racial divide. It is now Mill Creek Parkway.

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***



Cities are redistributing funds. Funds that would have been allocated to the police departments are being used to promote community engagement and the need for mental health resources. In Kansas City, Mayor Quinton Lucas and nine other council members passed two measures last week which would re-allocate more than \$42 million from KCPD's budget into a new, locally administered community services fund the police department could access to use for crime prevention, mental health services, conflict resolution training, or studying the root causes of crime. The plan also calls for spending an additional \$3 million for a new police academy class. The KC Board of Police Commissioners is threatening a lawsuit.

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

**In our Church:**

According to Fr. Bryan Massingale who spoke to America Magazine yesterday, "when it comes to acknowledging racism in the Catholic Church, not a lot has changed." While there is increased conversation about race issues, "we still have a long, long way to go."

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

- In many dioceses, the issue of race has not become a critical issue that has become a conversation. It is the parishes or groups in parishes that are pushing this conversation. It is neither a diocesan effort or a national effort. He believes diocese don't yet see that being anti-racist is part of being Catholic. In the pastoral letter *Open Wide our Hearts*, Fr. Massingale asserts that the Bishops do not reflect the lived experiences of black Americans. While they admit that "some of our citizens have encounters with the police that leave them fearful", the next sentence states "at the same time, we reject and condemn the harsh rhetoric directed at the police." They never acknowledge the lives lost at the hands of the police.

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

- "The Catholic Church's greatest deficit when dealing with race is that we don't want to deal with race issues in a way that is going to make white people uncomfortable. We want to move on. While we are OK talking about abortion, sexual morality, life issues, we haven't reached the point where the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to have difficult conversations about race **and** subsequent difficult actions in terms of erradicating this evil in our society."

***RESPONSE: Open our hearts, Jesus, to respond as you would.***

**LEADER:** While small steps are being taken to create more just society, there is much work to do. As Catholics and Christians, we believe in the Communion of Saints and we call upon the name of George Floyd to be with us...to guide our hearts...to BREATHE life into us and help us eradicate racism from our minds, our hearts, and from our communities. Let us continue to learn so we can grow in knowledge and passion and move toward an activism that produces systemic change.

As we approach Memorial Day, a day for remembering those who have died while serving their country, let us also remember all people of color who have died in this country at the hands of those who claim to serve their communities. As we pray this litany of just a few of the 181 people of color throughout the country who have died at the hands of law enforcement since George Floyd's death, I invite you to open your hearts and feel their spirits living on in you as we let our resolve for justice grow.

MATTHEW "ZADOK" WILLIAMS, 35, Dekalb, GA, APRIL 12, 2021

DAUNTE WRIGHT, 20, Brooklyn Center, MN, APRIL 11, 2021

JAMES LIONEL JOHNSON, 38, Takoma Park, MD, APRIL 7, 2021

DOMINIQUE WILLIAMS, 32, Takoma Park, MD, APRIL 7, 2021

MARVIN SCOTT III, 26, McKinney, TX, MARCH 14, 2021

***All you holy men and women, pray for us.***

JENOAH DONALD, 30, Hazel Dell, WA, FEBRUARY 9, 2021  
PATRICK WARREN, 52, Kileen, TX, JANUARY 10, 2021  
XZAVIER HILL, 18, Goochland County, VA, JANUARY 9, 2021  
ROBERT HOWARD, 30, Memphis, TN, JANUARY 5, 2021  
VINCENT BELMONTE, 18, Cleveland, OH, JANUARY 5, 2021

***All you holy men and women, pray for us.***

**2020**

ANDRE HILL, 47, Columbus, OH, DECEMBER 22, 2020  
BENNIE EDWARDS, 60, Oklahoma City, OK, DECEMBER 11, 2020  
CASEY GOODSON JR., 23, Columbus, OH, DECEMBER 4, 2020  
KEVIN PETERSON JR., 21, Vancouver, WA, OCTOBER 29, 2020  
WALTER WALLACE JR., 27, Philadelphia, PA, OCTOBER 26, 2020

***All you holy men and women, pray for us.***

JONATHAN PRICE, 31, Wolfe City, TX, OCTOBER 3, 2020  
KURT REINHOLD, 42, San Clemente, CA, SEPTEMBER 23, 2020  
DIJON KIZZEE, 29, Los Angeles, CA, AUGUST 31, 2020  
DAMIAN DANIELS, 30, San Antonio, TX, AUGUST 25, 2020  
ANTHONY MCCLAIN, 32, Pasadena, CA, AUGUST 15, 2020

***All you holy men and women, pray for us.***



JULIAN LEWIS, 60, Sylvania, GA, AUGUST 7, 2020

MAURICE ABISDID-WAGNER, 30, Maui, HI, JULY 26, 2020

RAYSHARD BROOKS, 27, Atlanta, GA, JUNE 12, 2020

PRISCILLA SLATER, 38, Harper Woods, Mich, JUNE 10, 2020

KAMAL FLOWERS, 24, New Rochelle, NY, JUNE 5, 2020

***All you holy men and women, pray for us.***

JAMEL FLOYD, 35, New York, NY, JUNE 3, 2020

DAVID MCATEE, 53, Louisville, KY, JUNE 1, 2020

CALVIN HORTON JR., 43, Minneapolis, MN, MAY 27, 2020

TONY MCDADE, 38, Tallahassee, FL, MAY 27, 2020

DION JOHNSON, 28, Phoenix, AZ, MAY 25, 2020

**ALL: GEORGE FLOYD, 46, MINNEAPOLIS, MN, MAY 25, 2020.**

***All you holy men and women, pray for us.***

LEADER: While dying, George called out to his mother. Together, let us cry out to Mary, our Mother, asking for her intercession and guidance as we pray: *Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

**LEADER:** Thank you for coming to this prayer service. May we continue to be the change we wish to see in this world. As we go forth, let us sing *Let There Be Peace on Earth*, using the inclusive language highlighted below. After our closing song, you are invited to stay to pray the **Rosary of Modern Sorrows.**

### **Closing Song: *Let There Be Peace on Earth***

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.  
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.  
**With God our Creator, family all are we.**  
Let us walk with **each other** in perfect harmony.  
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now.  
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow.  
To take each moment and live each moment with peace eternally.  
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

### **PRAY THEIR NAMES**

ERIC GARNER - JOHN CRAWFORD III - MICHAEL BROWN - EZELL FORD  
DANTE PARKER - MICHELLE CUSSEAU - LAQUAN MCDONALD - GEORGE MANN  
TANISHA ANDERSON - AKAI GURLEY - TAMIR RICE - RUMAIN BRISBON - JERAME REID  
MATTHEW AJIBADE - FRANK SMART - NATASHA MCKENNA - TONY ROBINSON - ANTHONY HILL  
MYA HALL - PHILLIP WHITE - ERIC HARRIS - WALTER SCOTT - WILLIAM CHAPMAN II  
ALEXIA CHRISTIAN - BRENDON GLENN - VICTOR MANUEL LAROSA - JONATHAN SANDERS  
FREDDIE GRAY - JOSEPH MANN - SALVADO ELLSWOOD - SANDRA BLAND  
ALBERT JOSEPH DAVIS - DARRIUS STEWART - BILLY RAY DAVIS - SAMUEL DUBOSE  
MICHAEL SABBIE - BRIAN KEITH DAY - CHRISTIAN TAYLOR - TROY ROBINSON  
ASSHAMS PHAROAH MANLEY - FELIX KUMI - KEITH HARRISON MCLEOD - JUNIOR PROSPER  
LAMONTEZ JONES - PATERSON BROWN - DOMINIC HUTCHINSON - ANTHONY ASHFORD  
ALONZO SMITH - TYREE CRAWFORD - INDIA KAGER - LA'VANTE BIGGS  
MICHAEL LEE MARSHALL - JAMAR CLARK - RICHARD PERKINS - NATHANIEL HARRIS PICKETT  
BENNI LEE TIGNOR - MIGUEL ESPINAL - MICHAEL NOEL - KEVIN MATTHEWS - BETTIE JONES  
QUINTONIO LEGRIER - KEITH CHILDRESS JR. - JANET WILSON - RANDY NELSON  
ANTRONIE SCOTT - WENDELL CELESTINE - DAVID JOSEPH - CALIN ROQUEMORE - DYZHAWN  
PERKINS - CHRISTOPHER DAVIS - MARCO LOUD - PETER GAINES - TORREY ROBINSON - DARIUS  
ROBINSON - KEVIN HICKS - MARY TRUXILLO - DEMARCUS SEMER - WILLIE TILLMAN  
TERRILL THOMAS - SYLVILLE SMITH - ALTON STERLING - PHILANDO CASTILE - TERENCE  
CRUTCHER - PAUL O'NEAL - ALTERIA WOODS - JORDAN EDWARDS - AARON BAILEY  
RONELL FOSTER - STEPHON CLARK - ANTWON ROSE II - BOTHAM JEAN  
PAMELA TURNER - DOMINIQUE CLAYTON - ATATIANA JEFFERSON - CHRISTOPHER WHITFIELD  
CHRISTOPHER MCCORVEY - ERIC REASON - MICHAEL LORENZO DEAN - BREONNA TAYLOR  
G E O R G E F L O Y D