



# CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON

THE CATHOLIC CENTER  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

17 August 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is time for us all, as people of faith, to stand with those working to heal the racial divide in our country and to resist and renounce any remnants of racism- from our own hearts and from our public spaces. We categorically reject the ideology of hatred and intolerance espoused by white supremacists, neo-nazis and other “alt-right” groups. Their message and their philosophy is entirely incompatible with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of our faith. Our Judeo-Christian Scriptures begin with the story of our common origin, from one God who is Creator of us all. From the perspective of our faith, we are all sisters and brothers.

As we are horrified by the violent events of intolerance in Charlottesville, Virginia last weekend, we should nonetheless be encouraged by the numbers of people coming together across the country and right here in our community to promote unity, to affirm the dignity of all human beings made in the image and likeness of God, and working to heal rather than forget the tragic consequences of slavery, segregation and all forms of racial injustice.

We cannot heal or move forward until we are willing to read history and understand current events from the perspective of those who have been oppressed and suffered discrimination against because of their race. We must learn from a brutal past and commit ourselves to a more just and fraternal present and future.

If the forces of hatred and racism wish to demonstrate and voice their venomous beliefs in Lexington, Frankfort or any of our communities, we must show them the strength of unity, we must be true witnesses of the love made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ, we must resist non-violently, and we must work together to build the kind of society in which all people have the opportunity to flourish and contribute to the common good.

Let us pray for unity to prevail, let us learn the lessons of history, let us listen to one another from the heart, let us see our diversity as a source of strength and beauty and let us work together to promote the dignity and inestimable value of each child of God.

Peace and all good,

Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.  
Catholic Diocese of Lexington