



open wide our hearts

the enduring call to love *a pastoral letter against racism*

This is the twelfth in a series of articles focused on helping share the important messages contained in this pastoral letter issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Walk Humbly with God: Going Forward

Almost thirty years ago, St. John Paul II reminded us just what is at stake. Each person “is called to a fullness of life which far exceeds the dimensions of his earthly existence, because it consists in sharing the very life of God. The loftiness of this supernatural vocation reveals the greatness and the inestimable value of human life.”⁴³ We are all called to that great life, to the communion of heaven where “a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue [stand] before the throne and before the Lamb” (Rev 7:9). That Lamb, Christ, showed us that the very life of God is love, and love requires something of each of us. We pray that the reader will join us in striving for the end of racism in all its forms, that we may walk together humbly with God and with all of our brothers and sisters in a renewed unity. For there is no place for racism in the hearts of any person; it is a perversion of the Lord’s will for men and women, all of whom were made in God’s image and likeness. We end by adopting the words of St. Paul: Brothers and sisters, “be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. Your every act should be done with love” (1 Cor 16:13-14).

As in all things, we turn to prayer, asking Our Blessed Mother to intercede on our behalf:

Mary, friend and mother to all,
through your Son, God has found a way
to unite himself to every human being,
called to be one people, sisters and
brothers to each other.

We ask for your help in following your Son,
so that prejudice and animosity will no
longer infect our minds or hearts
but will be replaced with a love that
respects the dignity of each person.

We ask for your help in calling on your Son,
seeking forgiveness for the times when
we have failed to love and respect one
another.

Mother of the Church,
the Spirit of your Son Jesus
warms our hearts:
pray for us.

We ask for your help in obtaining from your
Son the grace we need to overcome the evil
of racism and to build a just society.

Excerpt from “Open Wide Our Hearts: the enduring call to love”

A pastoral letter against racism from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops