



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

*Cardinal Rigali Center
20 Archbishop May Drive
St. Louis, Missouri 63119*

ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS STATEMENT REGARDING THE EVENTS IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

August 14, 2017—The sad events over the weekend again remind us of the evils of intolerance and injustice.

Racism, or any ideology which seeks to undermine the dignity and worth of human beings simply because of the color of their skin, must be condemned. Our country has a detestable history with regard to the treatment of its citizens, including discrimination and hatred that undermine the God-given dignity of every human person. Unfortunately, some of our fellow citizens cling to these detestable ideas which are fueled by hate and ignorance. We must boldly march forward to a time when “love and truth will meet; justice and peace will kiss.” (Ps. 85:11)

Just as light scatters the darkness, love and truth scatter evil. As Christians, we know that love and truth are found in the redemptive light of Jesus Christ. The foundation of our faith rests on the mandate Christ left us: to love one another as He loved us. If we choose this path, and follow Christ, He promises that we “may all be one.” But the oft-quoted commandment of Christ to love one’s neighbor is preceded by the oft-neglected commandment to “love God before all else.”

This forgotten admonition, to “love God before all else,” has placed our country, culture, and humanity in the hands of destructive nihilism and evil itself.

In 2014, in the midst of the protests in Ferguson, Archbishop Robert J. Carlson said our nation must deal with the sin of racism. That remains true. Racism is a sin because it is contrary to human dignity. What we have seen in Charlottesville, Baltimore, Ferguson, and elsewhere, is the result of a society that has put racism, fascism, nationalism, socialism, individualism, and other ideologies in place of God. These ideologies tear down human dignity because they determine human worth based not as we are, as beloved children of God, but based on race, class, or what one can do with one’s body. This is precisely why we must be adamantly outspoken against the legality of the grave evil of abortion. If we cannot see the connection in our society between the ability to kill a vulnerable, innocent child in the womb and the ability to hate a person based simply on the color of their skin, we are, truly, a nation without hope. Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said: “If a mother can kill her own child, what is left but for us to kill each other?” How can those of us who live in a society where a woman can kill the

child in her very womb be shocked when those who dwell on the fringe of society hate their neighbor because of the color of their skin?

The Archdiocese of St. Louis is committed to being an instrument of justice and peace. We engage daily in works of healing and reconciliation. We are committed to Christ's mission to bring forth his kingdom by prayer and laboring for justice and peace in our nation and world. We pray that all men and women will love one another as Christ loved us.

In addition to our daily, unceasing prayer that everyone be treated as God's beloved children, we invite you to please join us in our efforts:

- August 21, 2017: Disciples of Peace & Justice, Rosary commemorating the three-year journey of discipleship after the death of Michael Brown, 6:30 p.m., Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Parish's Our Lady of Lourdes grotto, 150 N Elizabeth Ave, Ferguson, MO 63135
- September 9, 2017: North City Deanery Interracial Relations Committee, 2nd Annual North City Deanery Pilgrimage. Please register online at: <http://tinyurl.com/y7qafwra> or contact Cheryl with any questions at cherarch21@sbcglobal.net
- September 30, 2017: Peace & Justice Commission First Annual Sister Antona Ebo Social Justice Conference, 8am-3pm, Cardinal Rigali Center, 20 Archbishop May Dr., St Louis, MO 63119

For information on these events and more, visit archstl.org.