

in a

WordTM

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Love thy Neighbor

Vote

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(CNS photo/Andrew Biraj, Catholic Standard)

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

As Catholics, we have a long tradition of engagement in the political process as a means of putting our faith into action. We are called to bring the best of ourselves and our faith to the public square—and yet today, many shy away from such involvement because our national and local conversations are filled with vitriol and harsh language, often directed at people themselves.

When personal attacks replace honest debate, no one wins. This kind of attack, no matter the reason, only serves to further divide our communities. As Catholics, we must model a better way. We invite you to join the Civilize It campaign by taking the pledge below as a way to promote civility, love our neighbors, and build community.

Civilize It is about making room in your heart for those with whom you disagree. We are called to recognize that each one of us is a beloved child of God and to respond in love to that reality. Civilize It is a non-partisan call to focus on the dignity of all people, even when we disagree, and to put faith in action by bearing witness to a better way forward.

Take the pledge below as an individual, family, or community. Anyone and everyone can commit together to honoring human dignity through civil conversation.

I PLEDGE:

1. Civility

To recognize the human dignity of those with whom I disagree, treat others with respect, and rise above attacks when directed at me.

2. Clarity

To root my political viewpoints in the Gospel and a [well formed conscience](#), which involves prayer, conversation, study and listening. I will stand up for my convictions and speak out when I witness language that disparages others' dignity, while also listening and seeking to understand others' experiences.

3. Compassion

To encounter others with a tone and posture which affirms that I honor the dignity of others and invites others to do the same. I will presume others' best intentions and listen to their stories with empathy. I will strive to understand before seeking to be understood.

For more information on **Civilize It** go to:
<https://www.wearesaltandlight.org>



LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

Remember the Missions



WORLD MISSION SUNDAY celebrated on October 18 joins all Catholics of the world into one community of faith. At Mass that Sunday, we recommit ourselves to our common vocation, through Baptism, to be missionaries, through prayer, participation in the Eucharist, and by giving generously to the collection for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

In his message for World Mission Sunday this year, Pope Francis asks us to respond to our baptismal call to mission by saying, “Here I Am, Send Me.” The following are words from Pope Francis for Mission Sunday.

“In this year marked by the suffering and challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the missionary journey of the whole Church continues in light of the words found in the account of the calling of the prophet Isaiah: “Here am I, send me” (6:8). This is the ever new response to the Lord’s question: “Whom shall I send?” (ibid.). This invitation from God’s merciful heart challenges both the Church and humanity as a whole in the current world crisis. “Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. **We have realized that we are**

on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat... are all of us. Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying ‘We are perishing’ (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together can we do this.”

“We are indeed frightened, disoriented and afraid. Pain and death make us experience our human frailty, but at the same time remind us of our deep desire for life and liberation from evil. In this context, the call to mission, the invitation to step out of ourselves for love of God and neighbour presents itself as an opportunity for sharing, service and intercessory prayer. **The mission that God entrusts to each one of us leads us from fear and introspection to a renewed realization that we find ourselves precisely when we give ourselves to others.”**



“Understanding what God is saying to us at this time of pandemic also represents a challenge for the Church’s mission. Illness, suffering, fear and isolation challenge us. The poverty of those who die alone, the abandoned, those who have lost their jobs and income, the homeless and those who lack food challenge us. Being forced to observe social distancing and to stay at home invites us to rediscover that we need social relationships as well as our communal relationship with God.”

“Far from increasing mistrust and indifference, this situation should make us even more attentive to our way of relating to others. And prayer, in which God touches and moves our hearts, should make us ever more open to the need of our brothers and sisters for dignity and freedom, as well as our responsibility to care for all creation. The impossibility of gathering as a Church to celebrate the Eucharist has led us to share the experience of the many Christian communities that cannot celebrate Mass every Sunday. In all of this, God’s question: “Whom shall I send?” is addressed once more to us and awaits a generous and convincing response: “Here am I, send me!” (Is 6:8). God continues to look for those whom he can send forth into the world and to the nations to bear witness to his love, his deliverance from sin and death, his liberation from evil (cf. Mt 9:35-38; Lk 10:1-12).”



in a word or two

Front cover photo is of Washington Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory processing to the altar during the 68th annual Red Mass sponsored by the John Carroll Society at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington Oct. 4, 2020. (CNS photo/Andrew Biraj, Catholic Standard)

Black sisters urge U.S. Catholics, church leaders to do more to end racism

By Carol Zimmermann Catholic News Service

The National Black Sisters' Conference issued a "clarion warning" to U.S. Catholics saying church members and leaders have not done enough to speak out against the sin of racism. "In this moment of dual life-threatening pandemics; COVID-19 and racism, the voice of the church in America is, for the most part, eerily silent when it comes to the racial unrest in this country," said the Sept. 16 statement by the national organization of more than 150 Black Catholic women

religious and associates in the United States.



(2019 CNS photo/Kevin J. Parks, Catholic Review)

The group said they felt compelled to "hold up the light," referring to an old spiritual with the same title, where light is held aloft to "expose the darkness of evil and sin, thereby destroying its power." "We are holding up the light," the sisters said, "against the sin of racism that is still alive and well in the Catholic Church today."

They said this has been happening "since the first Catholics set foot on this continent, armed with papal bulls sanctioning and blessing the enslavement of Africans and the removal of native peoples from their lands, all in the name of Christianity." This continued, they added, during the civil rights movement when Black Catholics continued to experience "racism, segregation, Jim Crow laws, disenfranchisement, police brutality, and socioeconomic inequality in society and in the Catholic Church," while church leadership, "for the most part, remained silent and disinvested."

And now, during this current moment of racial unrest, the sisters maintain that Catholics are not doing enough. "Very few bishops have spoken out in support of the peaceful demonstrations by the Black Lives Matter movement; very few have called out the racism and hypocrisy of many white Catholic priests and laity. Sadly, the leadership of the church is not addressing the slaughter of Black lives in the streets of our cities by those sworn to serve and protect as a pro-life issue," they said.

The sisters also questioned why the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops hadn't "publicly issued a strong statement in support of the courageous actions of their brother bishops," referring to Washington Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory and Bishop Mark J. Seitz of El Paso, Texas, as well as other bishops and priests who have shown support for the Black Lives Matter movement.

In response to the sisters' statement, Bishop Shelton J. Fabre of Houma-Thibodaux, chairman of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism, said: "We have great respect for the women religious who do so much for their communities, the laity and the church at large. "We invite the sisters to be in conversation and deeper collaboration with their local bishops, many of which have spoken out boldly in confronting racism as an attack against the sanctity of life and contrary to who we are and are called to be as disciples of Jesus Christ."

Ron Rolheiser, OMI and the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas have developed a program for older seekers of the Word. **The program is titled Forest Dwelling: Spirituality for our Wisdom Years** This two year program of formation and education, beginning in January 2021, is designed for more mature seekers who desire to mindfully embrace the challenges and opportunities of aging and diminishment by accessing the deep wisdom embedded in the world's great mystical and contemplative traditions. The goal of the Forest Dwelling program is to prepare participants to live wisely and well during their remaining years so that in the words of Henri Nouwen, "they might be able to give both their life and death away" for the sake of the world.

For more information click here:

<https://ost.edu/forestdwelling/>



For more information on the Missions go to:

www.svdmissions.org

Divine Word Missionaries is an international missionary community of over 7,000 brothers and priests. In 1905 the SVDs began working among African Americans in the Southern United States. Today, Divine Word Missionaries work in over 35 parishes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Florida and Arkansas.

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