



Archdiocese of Santa Fe

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NEWS RELEASE

Archbishop John C. Wester Urges the Faithful to Participate in Prayer & Action for Racial Justice

Limited Seating due to COVID-19

Facebook Livestream

<https://www.facebook.com/Masses-from-St-Joseph-on-the-Rio-Grande-112836890430507>

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

7:00 p.m.

St. Joseph on the Rio Grande Catholic Community

5901 St. Josephs Dr NW

Albuquerque, NM 87120

ALBUQUERQUE – Monday, June 1, 2020 – Archbishop John C. Wester urges the faithful to participate in prayer and action for racial justice Wednesday, June 3, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. St. Joseph on the Rio Grande Catholic Community in Albuquerque. Due to COVID-19, limited seating will be available. Attendees will be required to wear masks and abide by social distancing requirements. The prayer service will be live streamed and recorded via Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Masses-from-St-Joseph-on-the-Rio-Grande-112836890430507>

The recent horrific and senseless death of Mr. George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis, Minnesota police and subsequent demonstrations and violence has stirred fear, frustration, confusion in the African American Community particularly, and the country at large. Mr. Floyd's death and that of so many other black and brown men and women pains us, and it should. Pain signals that something is not right in our relationships and community. The source of our pain is the sin of racism and violence.

Today in our country, we witness persistent racism in its many forms. We also witness police brutality on the part of some, and acknowledge that even one case is too many. Racism causes deep wounds in the fabric of our human family, and these wounds have festered over centuries. Slavery is a stain on our nation that continues to affect us. This persistent violence tears mercilessly at the fabric of the human family and ignores the God-given dignity of every human person. It leaves us crying, "Oh Lord, how long?" While we pray for our first responders that they will be safe, at the same time I understand the frustration, pain and hurt of so many people of color in our country. We can no longer ignore the source of our pain. We cannot just stand by and do nothing. We cannot continue to live with so much hate and violence festering within our community.

The signs of this time are asking us to be awake, to witness what is happening, and to speak and act in love when we see racism around us. These times call for both charity and justice. Charity calls us to love each other as God has loved us, to recognize the inherent dignity of each person. If we are to have peace and harmony in this country for all people,

we must come to understand, to respect, to honor the dignity of each human person, from “womb to tomb.”

We also must act with justice for true and lasting peace. Pope Paul VI words come to mind, “If you want peace, work for justice.” Justice calls us to prophetic action to restore right relationships and to change the sinful structures that keep us from love. We must help to rid this country of hate, fear, and hostility and flood it with love and justice: love of God, love of self, love of family, love of our neighbor, love of country, love of each other. This is how we love our neighbor as ourselves and act as Jesus would.

I am reminded of and challenged by both the Gospel of Luke and the prophet Micah’s words. Jesus’ ministry began with these words: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...to bring good news to the poor, liberty to the captives, new sight to the blind and to set the downtrodden free” (Luke 4:18). The prophet Micah reminds us of what is required of us: “...Only to do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). Also in Luke, the parable of the Good Samaritan names our obligation as Christians to be a good neighbor, to be the one who stops and helps the injured, the one who does not hesitate to accept the responsibility of healing. These words give us strength to follow God’s path for right relationships.

I call on us to pray, to act with justice, and to accept the responsibility to bring about healing and lasting peace.

I will be leading a prayer service for peace in our communities on Wednesday, June 3, 7:00pm at St. Joseph on the Rio Grande Church in Albuquerque to ask the Holy Spirit, poured out in love at Pentecost, to infuse us with wisdom, courage, and love to stand in solidarity with those who suffer, and to work, with God’s help, to transform the evil of racism in all its forms. I will also hold in prayer all who are suffering or who have died from COVID-19. Join me either in person or virtually.

Most Reverend John C. Wester
Archbishop of Santa Fe

[Prayer Service for Peace in Our Communities Flyer English](#)
[Servicio de Oración por la Paz en nuestras Comunidades Español](#)

[Prayer for Peace Prayer card from USCCB English](#)
[Oración por la Paz Tarjeta de Oración de USCCB Español](#)

---Contact: ASF Office of Social Justice/Respect Life 505.831.8167--END

Prayer Service For Peace In Our Communities

7pm Wednesday, June 3, 2020

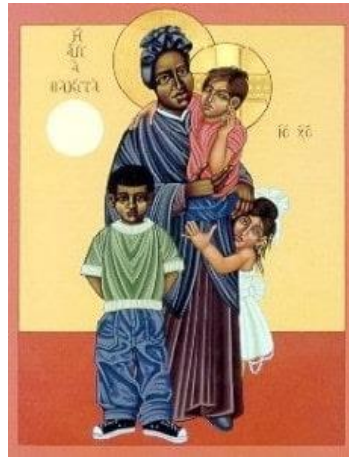
St. Joseph on the Rio Grande Church, 5901 St. Josephs Dr, NW,
Albuquerque

**If you are coming to the church, please be sure to bring and wear a mask. Limited seating.

Archbishop John C. Wester, Presider

Prayer Service will be live-streamed and recorded. Join us:

<https://www.facebook.com/Masses-from-St-Joseph-on-the-Rio-Grande-112836890430507>



St. Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of victims and survivors of human trafficking and slavery, offers hope to victims and survivors that as children of God, victims are already free. Pray for Us!

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*"Racism is not a thing of the past or simply a throwaway political issue to be bandied about when convenient. It is a real and present danger that must be met head on. As members of the Church, we must stand for the more difficult right and just actions instead of the easy wrongs of indifference. We cannot turn a blind eye to these atrocities and yet still try to profess to respect every human life.*

*We serve a God of love, mercy, and justice."*

**(Statement, U.S. Bishop Chairmen in Wake of Death of George Floyd & National Protests, 5/29/20)**

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"Some of you said: this system can no longer be endured.

We must change it; we must put human dignity again at the center
and on that pillar build the alternative social structures we need.

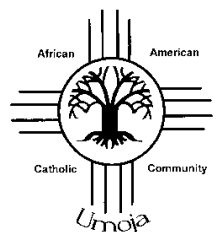
It must be done with courage, but also with intelligence,
with tenacity but without fanaticism,
with passion but without violence.

And among us all, addressing the conflicts without being trapped in them,
always seeking to resolve the tensions
to reach a higher plane of unity, peace and justice."

—Pope Francis, 10/28/14



Sponsored by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe African American Catholic Community, the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Office of Social Justice and Respect Life and St. Joseph's on the Rio Grande Church.





PRAYER FOR PEACE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Let us pray . . .

O Lord our God, in your mercy and kindness,
no thought of ours is left unnoticed, no desire or
concern ignored.

You have proven that blessings abound
when we fall on our knees in prayer,
and so we turn to you in our hour of need.

Surrounded by violence and
cries for justice, we hear your voice telling us what is
required . . .

*“Only to do justice and to love goodness,
and to walk humbly with your God” (Mi 6:8).*

Fill us with your mercy so that we, in turn, may be
merciful to others.

Strip away pride, suspicion, and racism
so that we may seek peace and justice in our
communities.

Strengthen our hearts so that they beat only to the
rhythm of your holy will.

Flood our path with your light as we walk humbly
toward a future
filled with encounter and unity.

Be with us, O Lord, in our efforts, for only by the
prompting of your grace
can we progress toward virtue.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.