

FROM THE DESK OF ARCHBISHOP
SCHNURR CONCERNING THE
EVENTS OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

[This message from Archbishop Schnurr arrived just after the deadline for last Sunday's bulletin, but it is worth our time. – JK]

The bigotry and violence that descended upon Charlottesville, Virginia, emerged from the same sin of racism which can plague any community in America, including those of our own Archdiocese ... I echo for the faithful of our local Church the response of Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, to these horrendous events and the resulting loss of life:

Let us unite ourselves in the spirit of hope offered by the clergy, people of faith, and all people of good will who peacefully defended their city and country.

We stand against the evil of racism, white supremacy and neo-nazism. We stand with our sisters and brothers united in the sacrifice of Jesus, by which love's victory over every form of evil is assured. At Mass, let us offer a special prayer of gratitude for the brave souls who sought to protect us from the violent ideology displayed yesterday. Let us especially remember those who lost their lives. Let us join their witness and stand against every form of oppression.

As Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia observed, "[t]he wave of public anger about white nationalist events in Charlottesville is well warranted." Such public displays of bigotry attack our very core belief about who we are as human beings, creations made in God's image and likeness with infinite dignity. As members of one human family, no one of us can ever claim to be superior to another in God's eyes, let alone our own.

More needs to be done than to simply hope that such events as Charlottesville do not happen again. I urge all of us to stand firmly against such public displays of hate by being daily mindful of everyone's inherent dignity in our churches, schools, workplaces and families. I challenge us all to oppose harassment of anyone on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, orientation, or faith tradition. When we find ourselves bystanders to harassment, we must find the courage to stand up for justice and equality. In doing so, we need to summon the grace to respond civilly and not perpetuate the cycle of violence, no matter how righteous our cause.

On September 9, 2016, the Feast of St. Peter Claver, the U.S. Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Cincinnati made a commitment to be more proactive in addressing racism and violence through the Peace in Our Communities campaign. In the wake of current events, as we approach the anniversary of this Feast, I recommit our local Archdiocese to addressing this disgrace through prayer, dialogue, and tangible action.

BACK TO THE PASTOR'S PRINTER

Bigotry and prejudice are insidious sins. I suspect that every person has at least some touch of them, although whom it is against varies from person to person. It is insidious because it is often in us without us recognizing it. It is a sin from several perspectives. First, it is a sin against charity because it is against our neighbor. Secondly, it is an insult to God who has made each person in His own image and likeness. (Not being able to recognize the image of God in a person, is not because God does bad art; it is that we do not see clearly.) It is a sin of hypocrisy because we receive Christ in the Eucharist, and then dishonor His presence in another person. We might not use derogatory terms for people, but we often are too tolerant of situations where the inherent dignity of people is disrespected by humor against them, by associating all of a race, religion, or way of life with a negative behavior or mindset, or when we put other values above the value of the dignity of each human being. Reflection on our attitudes, words, and actions can bring about the change of heart needed to love with the universal love of Christ. Resolving to express this love by not tolerating such behavior is a witness to the universal love of Christ. God calls us to no less.

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

I have heard that some people are experiencing difficulty with their new pledges for the new church. First, I am so grateful for your support; secondly, I am sorry for the difficulties. Thirdly, I ask for your patience when you call Leslie at the Archdiocese to get things clarified. She is dealing with 38,000 pledges from the archdiocesan campaign, and our second campaign is the first of the kind that she is working with. You can also call Mike Newton, our business manager, if things need to be straightened out. I know I myself can get impatient on the phone. So I am speaking to myself as well. Thanks for your help with this.

May God bless us and be our hope. – Fr. Jeff