

ST. THOMAS MORE  
**NEWMAN CENTER**

The Roman Catholic Campus Ministry for The Ohio State University  
A Ministry of the Paulist Fathers

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Dear Newman Center Community,

In our baptismal promises we renounce sin in order to live in the freedom of God's children. The sin of racism that led to the tragic death of George Floyd and countless others is a sin not only to renounce but to actively work to overcome its systemic hold over us and our society. Pope Francis reminds us all, "that we cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of any human life." The statement from the National Association of Black Catholic Administrators (NABCA) that I share with you at the end of this letter eloquently captures how our faith calls us to respond to this systemic sin.

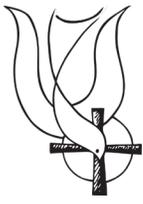
This is a very emotional time, and we as a staff at the Newman Center want to support you as best as we can. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us as we all come to terms with what is happening in our country. Beyond being there for you in a pastoral way, we also know that we do not have all the answers and welcome your perspective on this sin of racism. In the coming days and weeks and beyond, the Newman Center will be offering various opportunities to pray, listen, and learn how we can combat the sin of racism together.

- Catholic Relief Services Student Ambassadors will be offering Stations of the Cross focusing on prayers and reflections for racial justice. Watch for more details at [BuckeyeCatholic.com](http://BuckeyeCatholic.com).
- On **Monday, June 8 at 4 p.m.** we will livestream a Prayer Service for an End of Racism and ask for God's guidance as we seek ways to preserve the dignity of every human person.
- On **Monday, June 8 at 7 p.m.** we invite you to gather (safely observing social distancing guidelines) in the Newman Center Main Sanctuary for an in-person Prayer Service for an End to Racism. [Please RSVP to this event.](#)
- Beginning on **Tuesday, June 16 from 6:30 – 8 p.m.**, Dr. Judy Guion-Utsler, United Methodist ordained elder and chaplain at Otterbein University will lead us in a five-week interactive Zoom session entitled "Waking Up White: An opportunity to explore issues of race and racism in difficult times." During the sessions we will read and discuss the book "Waking Up White" by Debby Irving as we also explore and understand our racial identities and stories. Watch for more details and how to sign up at [BuckeyeCatholic.com](http://BuckeyeCatholic.com).
- As a staff, we are also going to be reflecting on racial issues and how we can be more intentionally aware and welcoming in our ministry.

Thank you for all your support and prayers during these difficult times as together we strive to end the sin of racism and promote the dignity and respect of all people.

In prayer,

Fr. Ed Nowak, CSP  
Director



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### **Statement from the National Association of Black Catholic Administrators:**

The horrible death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, caught on video for the world to see, has incensed our nation. His death and other recent incidents around the country have brought a piercing light on deep-seated problems in our country that need to be answered by each of us in a spirit of love and conversion of heart, as we embrace a culture of life and respect for all, remembering that every one of us is made in the image and likeness of God. Saint Paul tells us, "God has reconciled the world to himself in Christ... entrusting to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). As racism continues to manifest itself throughout our country, we must strengthen our efforts in continuing Christ's work of reconciliation. Our Christian faith calls us to see each other universally as members of God's family; therefore, our faith also calls us to confront and overcome racism. While we pray for peaceful and non-violent methods to confront this sin, we also stand in passionate support of our communities that are understandably outraged. We, as a Church, must find ways to understand the pain of our brothers and sisters and respond to the hurt with the love that Christ demonstrates to us. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have called upon all Catholics to, "Pray and work toward a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of truth to touch the hearts of all in the United States and to come down upon our criminal justice and law enforcement systems." Let us step up and be the Church of love, compassion, mercy, and understanding that Christ created us to be as we join those who are marginalized and on the peripheries in the pursuit of justice. May the spirit of God unite us in love and respect and heal our broken society.