



Sowers of Justice

Racial Unity Working Group

May 10, 1999

Most Rev. Walter F. Sullivan
Diocese of Richmond
811 Cathedral Place
Richmond, VA 23220

Dear Bishop Sullivan,

We are writing in response to your invitation to reflect on key themes for your upcoming series of Jubilee Pastoral Reflections to be published in *The Catholic Virginian*. We hope that you will consider devoting one of these articles to racism and the need for racial inclusivity in parishes. Racism is still a harsh reality in our diocese, both in society and in church.

Enclosed is one page of reflections from our Working Group. It is based on input from several different racial and ethnic faith communities within the diocese that we consulted. We urge you to write about these issues in light of Catholic social teaching:

"Racism is the sin that says some human beings are inherently superior and others essentially inferior because of race ... It is a denial of the truth of the dignity of each human being revealed by the mystery of the Incarnation."

– U.S. Bishops, **Brothers & Sisters to Us: A Pastoral Letter on Racism in Our Day**, 1979

"All racist theories are contrary to Christian faith and love. And yet ... racism still exists and continually reappears in different forms. It is a wound in humanity's side that mysteriously remains open. Everyone, therefore, must make efforts to heal it with great firmness and patience ..."

– Pontifical Justice & Peace Commission, **The Church and Racism: Toward A More Fraternal Society**, 1988

Thank you so much for your strong commitment to racial justice in our diocese!

Sincerely,

Cora Marie Billings, RSM
Marilyn Breslow
Margaret Dabney
Nancy Glynn, CBS
Samantha Haniffa

Tanya LeSane
Pat McCabe, CSC
Elisa Montalvo
Candra Parker

Gail Robinson
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Michael Stone
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cc Steve Colecchi