



# NOVENA PRAYER: PEACE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

We invite you to join us in a Novena Prayer for “Peace In Our Communities” October 17—25, 2016. The Novena Prayer will culminate in a Prayer Vigil on the steps on the Hamilton County Courthouse 1000 Main Street from 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

October 25, 2016 is the trial date for Officer Ray Tensing for the shooting death of Samuel Dubose. As a part of our prophetic ministry, we stand in solidarity with the Christian Community as we pray for the Samuel Dubose Family and Officer Ray Tensing & Family.

The purpose Prayer Vigil is not to determine the verdict, but to stand together as a Christian people who know mercy and God’s grace.

Each day of the Novena Prayer will include: Silent Prayer, Reflection on a Scripture Passage; and a Reflection on a Church Document. Please visit: [www.catholiccincinnati.org](http://www.catholiccincinnati.org) for resources.

We ask all volunteers who will participate in the Prayer Vigil at the Courthouse on October 25, 2016 to attend a Training and Purpose Session at 9:00 a.m. at the Archdiocese of Cincinnati 100 East Eighth Street, First Floor Conference Room on October 25, 2016.

On July 8, 2016, responding to the racially-charged shootings in Baton Rouge, Minneapolis and Dallas, Most Reverend Joseph Kurtz, Archbishop of Louisville and USCCB President issued a statement that concluded in this way:

*“In the days ahead, we will look toward additional ways of nurturing an open, honest and civil dialogue on issues of race relations, restorative justice, mental health, economic opportunity, and addressing the question of pervasive gun violence.”*

In this Novena Prayer, we set out to use our prophetic voice as we participate in the social issues of our day in order to build unity and to promote God’s mercy.



Sponsored by the Archdiocesan Offices of:

African American Pastoral Ministries, Catholic Charities, Social Action and Worship

For additional information contact Deacon Royce Winters or Mr. Tony Stieritz at 513.421.3131. Ext. 3

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**Purpose:** To stand in solidarity with congregations across the Greater Cincinnati Area to fast and pray for unity and hope during a time that could be tumultuous in our city, as citizens brace themselves for the Trial of Officer Ray Tensing for the shooting death of Samuel Dubose.

We pray for reconciliation in our city according to Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, "All this from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation."

## **Period of Fasting & Prayer:**

"The minimum requirement for fasting allows a person to eat one full meal. Two smaller meals may be taken, not to equal one full meal. If one chooses to fast, it should be a sacrifice which includes some degree of hunger and self-restraint. In addition, prayer should be included as a part of the fast." *USCCB, Information on Fasting*

Certainly, the Promoting of Peace In Our Communities is an appropriate way to express this sacrifice and prayer.

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## **Day One: October 17 – Memorial of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr**

**Opening Prayer – Almighty and ever-living God, who adorn the sacred body of your Church with the confessions of holy Martyrs, grant we pray, that just as the glorious passion of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, which we celebrate today, brought him splendor, so it may be for us unending protection. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **Scripture & Documents of the Church:**

- **Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.” Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, “Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.” Luke 4: 18-21**

On July 20, 2016, the General Secretary of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops sent out an memorandum reference looking *“toward additional ways of nurturing an open, honest and civil dialogue on issues of race relations, restorative justice, mental health, economic opportunity, and addressing the question of pervasive gun violence.”*

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## **Day Two: October 18 – Feast of Saint Luke, Evangelist**

**Opening Prayer – Lord God, who chose Saint Luke to reveal by his preaching and writings the mystery of your love for the poor, grant that those who already glory in your name may persevere as one heart and one soul and that all nations may merit to see your salvation. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth. God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.**

Racism is an evil which endures in our society and in our Church. Despite apparent advances and even significant changes in the last two decades, the reality of racism remains. In large part it is only external appearances which have changed.

In 1958 we spoke out against the blatant forms of racism that divided people through discriminatory laws and enforced segregation. We pointed out the moral evil that denied human persons their dignity as children of God and their God-given rights. A decade later in a second pastoral letter we again underscored the continuing scandal of racism called for decisive action to eradicate it from our society.(2) We recognize and applaud the readiness of many Americans to make new strides forward in reducing and eliminating prejudice against minorities. We are convinced that the majority of Americans realize that racial discrimination is both unjust and unworthy of this nation. Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

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## **Day Three: October 19 – Memorial of Saints John de Brebeuf and Isaac Jogues, Priests and Companions, Martyrs**

**Opening Prayer – O God, who chose to manifest the blessed hope of your eternal Kingdom by the toil of Saints John de Brebeuf, Isaac Jogues and their companions and by the shedding of their blood, graciously grant that through their intercession the faith of Christians may be strengthened day by day. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven. For in this tent we groan, longing to be further clothed with our heavenly habitation if indeed, when we have taken it off, we shall not be found naked.**

**For while we are in this tent we groan and are weighed down, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now the one who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a first installment. So we are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5: 1-7**

Racism is a sin: a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father. Racism is the sin that says some human beings are inherently superior and others essentially inferior because of races. It is the sin that makes racial characteristics the determining factor for the exercise of human rights. It mocks the words of Jesus: "Treat others the way you would have them treat you." (4) Indeed, racism is more than a disregard for the words of Jesus; it is a denial of the truth of the dignity of each human being revealed by the mystery of the Incarnation. Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

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## **Day Four October 20 – Saint Paul of the Cross, Priest**

**Opening Prayer – May the Priest Saint Paul, whose only love was the Cross, obtain for us your grace, O Lord, so that, urged on more strongly by his example, we may each embrace our own cross with courage. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous\* will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ Matthew 25: 35-45**

Today in our country men, women, and children are being denied opportunities for full participation and advancement in our society because of their race. The educational, legal, and financial systems, along with other structures and sectors of our society, impede people's progress and narrow their access because they are black, Hispanic, Native American or Asian.

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The structures of our society are subtly racist, for these structures reflect the values which society upholds. They are geared to the success of the majority and the failure of the minority. Members of both groups give unwitting approval by accepting things as they are. Perhaps no single individual is to blame. The sinfulness is often anonymous but nonetheless real.

The sin is social in nature in that each of us, in varying degrees, is responsible. All of us in some measure are accomplices. As our recent pastoral letter on moral values states: "The absence of personal fault for an evil does not absolve one of all responsibility. We must seek to resist and undo injustices we have not ceased, least we become bystanders who tacitly endorse evil and so share in guilt in it."(8) Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

This is what the LORD requires  
**Do Justice**  
love mercy & walk humbly with God

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**Day Five: October 21 – Memorial of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr**

**Opening Prayer – Almighty and ever-living God, grant that we may conform our will to yours and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **Know this, my dear brothers: everyone should be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of a man does not accomplish the righteousness of God. Therefore, put away all filth and evil excess and humbly welcome the word that has been planted in you and is able to save your souls. Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves.**

**For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect law\* of freedom and perseveres, and is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, such a one shall be blessed in what he does. James 1: 19-25**

Crude and blatant expression of racist sentiment, though they occasionally exist, are today considered bad form. Yet racism itself persists in covert ways. Under the guise of other motives, it is manifest in the tendency to stereotype and marginalize whole segments of the population whose presence perceived as a threat. It is manifest also in the indifference that replaces open hatred. The minority poor are seen as the dross of a post-industrial society -- without skills, without motivation, without incentive.

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They are expendable. Many times the new face of racism is the computer print-out, the graph of profits and losses, the pink slip, the nameless statistic.

Today's racism flourishes in the triumph of private concern over public responsibility, individual success over social commitment, and personal fulfillment over authentic compassion. Then too, we recognize that racism also exists in the attitude and behavior of some who are themselves members of minority groups. Christian ideals of justice must be brought to bear in both the private and the public sector in order that covert racism be eliminated wherever it exists. Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

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**Day Six: October 22 – Saturday of the Twenty-Ninth Week In Ordinary Time**

**Opening Prayer – Almighty and ever-living God, grant that we may conform our will to yours and serve your majesty in sincerity of heart. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **Brothers and sisters: You have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for your benefit, namely, that the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly earlier. When you read this you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to human beings in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy Apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same Body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.**

**Of this I became a minister by the gift of God’s grace that was granted me in accord with the exercise of his power. To me, the very least of all the holy ones, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the inscrutable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for all what is the plan of the mystery hidden from ages past in God who created all things, so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church to the principalities and authorities in the heavens.**

**This was according to the eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness of speech and confidence of access through faith in him. Ephesians 3: 2 - 12**

To the extent that racial bias affects our personal attitudes and judgments, to the extent that we allow another's race to influence our relationship and limit our openness, to the extent that we see yet close our hearts to our brothers and sisters in need, (22) - to that extent we are called to conversion and renewal in love and justice.

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As individuals we should try to influence the attitudes of others by expressly rejecting racial stereotypes, racial slurs and racial jokes. We should influence the members of our families, especially our children, to be sensitive to the authentic human values and cultural contributions of each racial grouping in our country.

We should become more sensitive ourselves and thereby sensitize our acquaintances by learning more about how social structures inhibit the economic, educational, and social advancement of the poor. We should make a personal commitment to join with others in political efforts to bring about justice for the victims of such deprivation. Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

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## **Day Seven: October 23 – Saint John of Capistrano, Priest**

**Opening Prayer – O God who raised up Saint John of Capistrano to comfort your faithful people in tribulation, place us, we pray, under your safe protection and keep your Church in everlasting peace. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **Brothers and sisters: I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine, by the power at work within us, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3: 14 - 21**

Mindful of its duty to be the advocate for those who hunger and thirst for justice's sake, the Church cannot remain silent about the racial injustices in society and its own structures. Our concern over racism follows, as well, from our strong commitment to evangelization. Pope John Paul II has defined evangelization as bringing consciences, both individual and social, into conformity with the Gospel.(3) We would betray our commitment to evangelize ourselves and our society were we not to strongly voice our condemnation of attitudes and practices so contrary to the Gospel. Therefore, as the bishops of the United States, we once again address our pastoral reflections on racism to our brothers and sisters of all races.

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We do this, conscious of the fact that racism is only one form of discrimination that infects our society. Such discrimination belies both our civil and religious traditions.

The United States of America rests on a constitutional heritage that recognizes the equality, dignity, and inalienable rights of all its citizens. Further, we are heirs of a religious teaching which proclaims that all men and women, as children of God, are brothers and sisters. Every form of discrimination against individuals and groups--whether because of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, economic status, or national or cultural origin--is a serious injustice which has severely weakened our social fabric and deprived our country of the unique contributions of many of our citizens. While cognizant of these broader concerns, we wish to draw attention here to the particular form of discrimination that is based on race. Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

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## **Day Eight: October 24 – Saint Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop**

**Opening Prayer – O God, who for the evangelization of peoples strengthened the Bishop Saint Anthony Mary Claret with admirable charity and long-suffering, grant, through this intercession, that, seeking the things that are yours, we may earnestly devote ourselves to winning our brothers and sisters for Christ. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **Brothers and sisters: I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace; one Body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4: 1- 6**

The church must be constantly attentive to the Lord's voice as He calls on His people daily not to harden their hearts.(23) We urge that on all levels the Catholic Church in the United States examine it's conscience regarding attitudes and behavior towards blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asians. We urge consideration of the evil of racism as it exists in the local Church and reflection upon the means of combating it.

We urge scrupulous attention at every level to insure that minority representation goes beyond mere tokenism and involves authentic sharing in responsibility and decision making. We encourage Catholics to join hands with members of other religious groups in the spirit of ecumenism to achieve the common objectives of justice and peace.

During the struggle for legal recognition of racial justice, an important chapter in American history was written as religious groups, Jewish, Protestants, and Catholic, joined in support of civil rights movement which found much of its initiative and inspiration within the black Protestant Churches. This cooperation should continue to serve as a model for our times. Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

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## **Day Nine: October 25 – Tuesday of the Thirtieth Week In Ordinary Time**

**Opening Prayer – Almighty and ever-living God, increase our faith, hope and charity, and make us love what you command, so that we may merit what you promise. Through Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.**

- **Brothers and sisters: Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it says: *He ascended on high and took prisoners captive; he gave gifts to men.* What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended into the lower regions of the earth? The one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.**

**And he gave some as Apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the Body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood to the extent of the full stature of Christ, so that we may no longer be infants, tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching arising from human trickery, from their cunning in the interests of deceitful scheming. Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole Body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the Body's growth and builds itself up in love. Ephesians 4: 7 - 16**

Individuals move on many levels in our complex society: each of us is called to speak and act in many different settings. In each case may we speak and act according to our competence and as the Gospel bids us. With this as our prayer, we refrain from giving detailed answers to complex questions on which we ourselves have no special competence. Instead, we propose several guidelines of a general nature.

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The difficulties of these new times demand a new vision and a renewed courage to transform our society and achieve justice for all. We must fight for the dual goals of racial and economic justice with determination and creativity. Domestically, justice demands that we strive for authentic full employment, recognizing the special need for employment of those who, whether men or women, carry the principal responsibility for support of a family. Justice also demands that we strive for decent working conditions, adequate income, housing, education, and health care for all. Government at the national and local levels must be held accountable by all citizens for the essential services which all are entitled to receive. The private sector should work with various racial communities to insure that they receive a just share of the profits they have helped to create. Globally, we live in an interdependent community of nations, some rich, some poor. Some are high consumers of the world's resources; some eke out an existence on a near starvation level. As it happens, most of the rich, consuming nations are white and Christian; most of the world's poor are of other races and religions. Brothers And Sisters To Us, U.S. Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979

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