



Dear Sacred Heart Cathedral Community,

The recent acts of racial injustice and violence across our nation wound and anger us. For over 168 years, inspired by the Daughters of Charity and the Christian Brothers, Sacred Heart Cathedral has carried out the mission of providing an inclusive and nurturing Catholic education in the heart of San Francisco. That mission compels us to speak out. We unequivocally condemn the racism and violence perpetrated against members of the Black community and call on all people to channel their justifiable anger into creating a more just and equitable society.

As existing inequities continue to be revealed during the current pandemic, the recent killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and others remind us of the human toll of the deeply entrenched and painful legacies of racism and violence in the United States. As educational leaders, we want to deeply listen and reflect on the wisdom and experience of those most impacted by systemic inequalities as a means of providing the finest education for the students entrusted to our care.

*The killing of George Floyd was senseless and brutal, a sin that cries out to heaven for justice. How is it possible that in America, a black man's life can be taken from him while calls for help are not answered, and his killing is recorded as it happens?*

*I share the outrage of the black community and those who stand with them in Minneapolis, Los Angeles, and across the country. The cruelty and violence he suffered does not reflect on the majority of good men and women in law enforcement, who carry out their duties with honor. We know that. And we trust that civil authorities will investigate his killing carefully and make sure those responsible are held accountable.*

*We should all understand that the protests we are seeing in our cities reflect the justified frustration and anger of millions of our brothers and sisters who even today experience humiliation, indignity, and unequal opportunity only because of their race or the color of their skin. It should not be this way in America. Racism has been tolerated for far too long in our*

*way of life. —Archbishop José H. Gomez, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)*

We too face these challenges as a school community and must renew our efforts to educate, promote, and make real the intrinsic dignity of each person. Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group has been meeting weekly to discuss matters of inclusivity at SHC and a process to move forward. This team will help guide professional development for all staff next year. They will partner with school administration to promote equity and inclusion in academic, cocurricular and spiritual life. From these ongoing efforts, future goals and action steps will emerge, along with resources, to promote a culture of inclusion and respect throughout our entire campus and community.

We are reminded by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. that “an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” We are called to unite as a diverse community and support each other. May we transform ourselves and so help transform our world.

Sincerely,



Melinda Lawlor Skrade, PhD  
*President*



Gary J. Cannon, EdD  
*Principal*

*Racism is not simply one sin among many; it is a radical evil that divides the human family ... To struggle against it demands an equally radical transformation, in our own minds and hearts as well as in the structure of our society. —US Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letter on Racism*