



UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

Donald S. Nesti, CSSp
Center for Faith & Culture

The death of George Floyd has sent seismic shock through all of us personally and as communities throughout our land. At this time when all Christians celebrate Pentecost, the out pouring of God's Spirit of Love on the world, we seem rather like Ezekiel looking on a field of dry bones without any hope that they will ever see life. Or we feel like the babblers at Babel confounded by their inability to reach each other in their efforts to build a city for themselves. We become aware that while we proclaim that we are a nation *e pluribus unum*, *one out of many*, we are racked by fear, bias and prejudice that flow from sin which is our inability to love all and see all as neighbor. Our inability to live the *Unum*, *the One*, either drives us to violence or it leaves us in a catatonic state. Our problems in living the belief that *all people are created equal* are not political, economic, social or cultural. They are rooted in the human spirit wounded by sin, the breakdown of relationships. Our shared way of life as a people, our culture, is meant to assist us in our pursuit of happiness and enable us to live in freedom, peace, justice, equality. If, however, we choose dispositions of heart that divide us, proclaim our radical autonomy, champion our self-interest which leads us to identify only with those who think as we think, feel as we feel, look like us and act as we act, we become enclosed in a world driven by fear which excludes those who are not us. We scapegoat others to solve our problems. We no longer have the capacity welcome diversity which is the hallmark of community or to include and collaborate with others to create good for all.

We at the Nesti Center for Faith and Culture truly believe that God has poured His Spirit of Love onto the world; the Divine Spirit that gives sinew, muscle and flesh to our dry bones. The Divine Spirit, offered to all, can restore our capacity for conversation and dialogue and loving relationships. The Christian message is clear. God is Love. God is revealed fully in Jesus Christ, who gives us one commandment, that we love one another as Christ has loved us. We know that the world we live in is not "as good as it gets." In the end, we will be judged and recognized as followers of Christ by our love for all. Our mission at the Center is to champion the inviolable dignity of every human person created in God's image. From that dignity all human rights flow. No human person is excluded. We are the only ones who can shape our way of life is we believe that it is **OF ALL THE PEOPLE, FOR ALL THE PEOPLE AND BY ALL THE PEOPLE.**

For this reason, we strongly urge all who read this message to embrace and support the universal call of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' for action in prayer and justice in their message which we include below.

Reverend Binh Quach, CSSp
Director, the Donald S. Nesti, CSSp, Center for Faith and Culture