



Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange Joint Stance
with the National Conference for Community
on Racism
December 2000

Racism contradicts and offends the most fundamental beliefs and values of our faith traditions. Though we define and address holiness from different perspectives, we are one in our recognition that prejudice and discrimination should have no place among people of faith. Diversity is a blessing. Racism is a problem of the heart and an evil that must be eradicated from the institutional structures that shape our daily lives including our houses of worship.

Racism is learned behavior that is rooted in ignorance and fear, fomenting conflict and violence socially. Commitment to the core values of our faith traditions provides the means for eradicating racism through education and spiritual transformation on a personal and institutional level.

The uniqueness, dignity and worth of every person derives from creation. Each individual is equally precious, illuminating life. To diminish that flame by denigrating, disrespecting, or oppressing people based on the color of their skin or their ethnicity or their culture is to dishonor the sacred in the world, in oneself and in others.

People of faith must not allow racism to persist. Given the pervasive negative consequences of a racist society, a failure to be actively anti-racist prevents the ultimate realization of faith. We will condemn racism with the spirit and substance of our words, challenging racism through our influence and actions, and collaborate to lead America's faith communities into a transformed society where individual, cultural and institutional racism is not permitted.

As faith leaders guided by our holy scriptures and oral traditions...

We pledge to examine our own biases and positions of privilege through self-reflection and earnestly work to resolve them.

We pledge to model the repentance that turns us away from racism and leads us to work toward reconciliation that paves the path to cooperation.

We pledge to live by compassion and be consciously inclusive of all individuals.

We pledge to affirm the value of diversity and instill respect for dignity.

We pledge to promote understanding, inclusion and mutual respect and thus build community across the divides of race, ethnicity and culture.

We pledge to transform our institutions into authentically anti-racist and anti-oppressive communities of action.

We pledge to advocate for justice, demand equal opportunity for all, and create a beloved community for everyone to share.