



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

NEWS

Office of Communications
215 N. Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
269-903-0163
www.diokzoo.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Vicki Cessna, 269-929-8298 (cell); vcessna@diokzoo.org

Bishop Bradley renews call to stand up against racism in statement for Martin Luther King Jr. Day and National Day for Racial Healing

KALAMAZOO, Mich.: (January 12, 2018): Bishop Bradley released the following statement in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 15th and the National Day for Racial Healing on January 16th.

"The important observances of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day and the National Day for Racial Healing present us the opportunity to renew our steadfast commitment to stand up against racism. We celebrate Dr. King because he worked tirelessly to promote justice and equality for all people, while encouraging a culture of nonviolence and love of one another as brothers and sisters in the human family. Inspired by Jesus' Gospel message of love for all, Dr. King said: "Now there is a final reason I think that Jesus says, 'Love your enemies.' It is this: that love has within it a redemptive power. And there is a power there that eventually transforms individuals." *

"Recent acts of violence and hatred in many parts of our country are clearly motivated by racial bigotry. No matter who we are, or what position we hold, we must ensure that our words and deeds reflect civility, grace and mutual respect for all people. I join with Cardinal DiNardo, the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, who said in [his statement](#) that we must bring Dr. King's teachings into the present moment in a way that inspires lasting change. He quoted Dr. King who once wrote: "Along the way of life, someone must have the sense enough and the morality enough to cut off the chain of hate." (1958 Essay) As Cardinal DiNardo wrote, "breaking the chain of hate requires both courage and commitment."

"Last Fall I convened an Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism to stand up against this sin of racism. The committee members shared personal insights at the inaugural meeting, and will be making recommendations when they reconvene later this month on how we can position ourselves to "break the chain of hate" that might exist here within the nine counties of southwest Michigan that make up the Diocese of Kalamazoo. I am inspired by the committee members' commitment to identify and recommend ways the Church can help combat this pervasive evil.

"I call upon all people of good will to "have the sense enough and the morality enough" to stand up against racism so that we can live together in peace, with mutual respect, and to do as Jesus commanded: "As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

-30-

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "Love Your Enemies" sermon, Detroit, March 1961.

The Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo is the territory of Catholic churches and community led by Bishop Paul J. Bradley. The diocese was founded in 1971 when the Second Vatican Council called for the creation of smaller dioceses so that bishops could be more available to the people they serve. Today the diocese encompasses 5,337 square miles of nine counties in southwest Michigan: Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph and Branch and includes 59 parishes as well as 22 Catholic schools.