

July 6, 2020

Pastoral Statement on Racism

St. Alphonsus Liguori 'Rock' Catholic Church is a Redemptorist Parish welcoming all of God's children. We worship our Lord in a style that is Authentically Black and Truly Catholic. We strive to joyfully preach, teach and live the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The Pastor, staff and parishioners of St Alphonsus Liguori 'Rock' Catholic Church stand against racism and all the hateful ways it impacts our world and our community.

We stand against systemic and structural racism, white privilege, hate speech, and the continuing assault on the Black community.

We stand in support of the Black Lives Matter movement and assert that it should receive the same amount of resources and zeal from the Catholic Church as the pro-life movement.

We stand in solidarity with those calling for police reform which includes accountability, funding and training.

We challenge the subliminal and explicit miseducation that sanctions and enables the premise that white lives matter more than others.

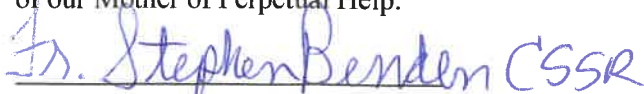
We call upon our elected representatives local, state and national to take immediate action to address the institutional racism that keeps a "knee on the necks" of African-Americans, particularly those in North St Louis city and county by denying access to quality health care, safe neighborhoods, fully funded schools and allowing the abuse of power that fosters racial inequality, injustice and mass incarceration.

While the leadership of the Archdiocese of St. Louis has acknowledged racism as a sin, it must further recognize it as an ethical and moral evil that can no longer be tolerated. We ask that immediate action be taken to halt the closing of schools in north St Louis city and county and fully support the efforts in the north city and county deaneries to maintain their current parishes by providing the support, i.e., financial and otherwise, needed to keeping them viable. We encourage the inclusion of African American men and women in leadership roles at the Archdiocesan and parish level.

We call upon white Catholics in the Archdiocese of St. Louis to stand with us in calling out racism and white privilege by committing to the eradication of both by continuing to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and welcoming all God's children to the table of the Lord.

We acknowledge that the 'Rock' Church has not always been a place of welcome and diversity. We apologize for actions in our parish history that included racial prejudice and suppression and for our silence and failure to speak out. We encourage others to do the same.

We pray to continue to serve our church, our Parishioners and the greater community through the richness of our Black spirituality in union with our God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit under the compassionate love of our Mother of Perpetual Help.



Rev Stephen J. Benden, C.Ss.R.
Pastor



Rev Rodney J. Olive, C.Ss.R.
Associate Pastor