

PRAYER SERVICE  
IN PENANCE FOR THE SIN OF RACISM  
AND TO PROMOTE RACIAL JUSTICE



Most Rev. Bernard A. Hebda, *Presider*

Cathedral of Saint Paul | National Shrine of the Apostle Paul

December 2, 2020

7:00 p.m.

**The Medallion of Saint Peter Claver**  
South Rose Window -Roundel Detail  
Cathedral of Saint Paul

“Blessed are they who mourn.” What better way to show the upside-down reality than through slavery, man’s total disregard for the sanctity of all human life? The second half of the beatitude continues, “for they shall be comforted.” Pope Benedict wrote of two kinds of mourning: the first is the kind that loses hope, the kind that eats away and destroys man from within. But the second is “the mourning occasioned by the shattering encounter with truth, which leads man to undergo conversion and to resist evil.” (Jesus of Nazareth, p. 86) The second beatitude is symbolized by the life of Saint Peter Claver (*on the cover*). His story is remarkable and moving. The historic reality of chattel slavery is one of the worst stains upon the western hemisphere, and Peter Claver’s work amongst those emerging from the hulls of slave ships earned him the respect and admiration of countless people in 16th century Columbia.

The Saint is holding a cross, his arm extended in gesture of blessing. On the left side, one can see the flowing waters of baptism, as Saint Peter is said to have baptized nearly 300,000 slaves in the course of his ministry. Six are pictured on one side of the window, bowing their heads as they prepare to receive the life-giving Sacrament. But Peter Claver also knew that he must first feed people’s bodies, and he holds in his arms a basket of food. Waiting in the port, Peter Claver would immediately enter an arriving ship and head down to the hull. There he would distribute whatever he had been able to acquire through begging— bread, fresh fruit (so many died of scurvy caused by a deficiency of Vitamin C) and even sweets.

Unusually, the window also depicts a cruel slave owner, poised to unleash his whip upon any unruly subjects. On the right side of the window may be found the society women of Cartagena, who too often chided the saint for caring too much about the slaves, and not others. I suspect that his ministry pricked their dull consciences! But truth be told, it was the leading women and men of society whom Peter made so uncomfortable! The expression on their faces is one of exasperation, perhaps in part because when Saint Peter Claver visited the slaves whom he baptized, he did not stay in the quarters of the plantation owners, but went directly to those whom he had baptized. He called himself “Slave of the slaves of God.”

Rev. John L. Ubel  
*Cathedral of Saint Paul Bulletin*  
October 11, 2015

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*Cover Photo*  
*by Greg Povolny*

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PRAYER SERVICE

# IN PENANCE FOR THE SIN OF RACISM AND TO PROMOTE RACIAL JUSTICE

## PROTOCOL DURING THE PANDEMIC

**All persons are required to wear face masks throughout the Prayer Service (except those proclaiming texts in the Sanctuary) and remain 6 feet from those not in the same household. Thank you for your cooperation.**

## THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

**During the COVID pandemic, congregational singing is suspended.**

*Please stand.*

OPENING HYMN *Sung by Schola*

*Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race*

ERHALT UNS HERR

Diverse in culture, nation, race,  
We come together by your grace.  
God, let us be a meeting ground  
Where hope and healing love are found.

God, let us be a bridge of care  
Connecting people everywhere.  
Help us confront all fear and hate  
And lust for power that separate.

When chasms widen, storms arise,  
O Holy Spirit, make us wise.  
Let our resolve, like steel be strong  
To stand with those who suffer wrong.

God, let us be a table spread  
With gifts of love and broken bread,  
Where all find welcome, grace attends,  
And enemies arise as friends.

SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GREETING

*Archbishop* In the name of the ✠ Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*Archbishop* Peace be with you.

*Assembly* **And with your spirit.**

## ADDRESS BY THE ARCHBISHOP AND OPENING PRAYER

### *Archbishop*

Today, we lament together the stark reality of racism in our world, our country, and our local community. Words and actions are powerful tools of communication and creativity. We use them to create, but also to destroy. We hope to recognize in our prayer tonight at least some of the many ways, intentionally and unintentionally, that our words and our silence, our actions and our inaction, contribute to racial division. We also hope to recognize what is needed to heal what divides us. Through our prayer of confession and for transformation, may the Holy Spirit inspire us. Let us pray.

*All pray for a moment in silence.*

**O** God, who gave one origin to all peoples,  
and willed to gather from them one family for yourself,  
fill all hearts, we pray, with the fire of your love  
and kindle in them a desire  
for the just advancement of their neighbor,  
that, through the good things which you so richly bestow upon all,  
every human person may be brought to perfection,  
every division may be removed,  
and equity and justice may be established in human society.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

*Assembly*

**Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

### FIRST READING

*Genesis 1:1-2, 26-28; 2:7*

*The Spirit/Breath of God creating the universe and humankind.*

**I**n the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters.... God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.

God created man in his image,  
in the divine image he created him;  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth."... The LORD God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being.

*Reader*    The word of the Lord.

*Assembly*    **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *Sung by Schola*

Psalm 104:1, 24; 29-30; 31, 24

*Lord, Send Out Your Spirit*

Michael Joncas

Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth;  
Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.  
Bless the LORD, O my soul!  
O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!  
How manifold are your works, O LORD!

Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth;  
Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.  
If you take away their breath, they perish and return to their dust.  
When you send forth your Spirit, they are created,  
and you renew the face of the earth.

Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth;  
Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.  
May the glory of the LORD endure forever;  
may the LORD be glad in his works!  
Pleasing to him be my theme; I will be glad in the LORD.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:14-17

*The Spirit cries out, "Abba, Father."*

**A**ll who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. You did not receive a spirit of slavery leading you back into fear, but a spirit of adoption through which we cry out, "Abba!" (that is, "Father!"). The Spirit himself gives witness with our spirit that we are children of God. But if we are children, we are heirs as well: heirs of God, heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so as to be glorified with him.

*Reader* The word of the Lord.

*Assembly* **Thanks be to God.**

*At the sounding of the pipe organ, all please stand as the Schola sings the Gospel Acclamation.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mode II

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

"Jesus said to his disciples, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.' The he breathed on the disciples and said to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"

*Cf. John 20:21-22*

GOSPEL DIALOGUE

*Deacon* The Lord be with you.

*Assembly* **And with your spirit.**

*Deacon* A reading from the Holy Gospel ✠ according to Luke.

*Assembly* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

## Death of Jesus as handing over his spirit.

**N**ow it was about midday, and darkness came over the whole land until mid-afternoon with an eclipse of the sun. The curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two. Jesus uttered a loud cry and said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." After he said this, he expired. The centurion, upon seeing what had happened, gave glory to God by saying, "Surely, this was an innocent man." When the crowd which had assembled for this spectacle saw what had happened, they went home beating their breasts.

*Deacon* The Gospel of the Lord.

*Assembly* **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*After being blessed ✠ with the Book of Gospels, all please be seated for the homily.*

## HOMILY

Archbishop Hebda

HYMN *Sung by Schola*

*In Christ there is no East or West*

MCKEE

In Christ there is no east or west,  
In him no south or north,  
But one great fam'ly bound by love  
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In him shall true hearts everywhere  
Their high communion find;  
His service is the golden cord  
Close-binding humankind.

Join hands, disciples in the faith,  
Whate'er your race may be!  
Who serve each other in Christ's love  
Are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and west,  
In him meet south and north,  
All Christly souls are one in him,  
Throughout the whole wide earth.



# SOLEMN PRAYER OF CONFESSING THE SIN OF RACISM AND REQUESTING GOD'S PARDON

*Archbishop* Brothers and Sisters, let us turn with trust to God our Father, who is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger, great in love and fidelity, and ask him to accept the repentance of his people who humbly confess their sins, and to grant them mercy.

*Deacon* Let us kneel.  
*All pray for a moment in silence.*

## I. CONFESSION OF SINS IN GENERAL

*Deacon* Let us pray that our confession and repentance will be inspired by the Holy Spirit, that our sorrow will be conscious and deep, and that, humbly viewing the sins of the past in an authentic "purification of memory", we will be committed to the path of true conversion.

*Silent prayer.*

*Schola* Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

*Archbishop* Lord God, your pilgrim Church, which you ever sanctify in the blood of your Son, counts among her children in every age, members whose holiness shines brightly forth and members whose disobedience to you contradicts the faith we profess and the Holy Gospel. You, who remain ever faithful, even when we are unfaithful, forgive our sins and grant that we may bear true witness to you before all men and women. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Assembly* **Amen.**  
*A candle is lit.*

## II. OF SINS COMMITTED IN ACTIONS AGAINST LOVE, PEACE, THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLES, AND RESPECT FOR CULTURES AND RELIGIONS

*Deacon* Let us pray that contemplating Jesus, our Lord and our Peace, Christians will be able to repent of the words and attitudes caused by pride, by hatred, by the desire to dominate others, by enmity towards members of other religions and towards the weakest groups in society, such as immigrants and itinerants.

*Silent prayer.*

*Schola* Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

*Archbishop* Lord of the world, Father of all, through your Son you asked us to love our enemies, to do good to those who hate us and to pray for those who persecute us. Yet Christians have often denied the Gospel; yielding to a mentality of power, they have violated the rights of ethnic groups and peoples and shown contempt for their cultures and religious traditions. Be patient and merciful towards us, and grant us your forgiveness! We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Assembly* **Amen.**  
*A candle is lit.*

### III. CONFESSION OF SINS AGAINST THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN RACE

*Deacon* Let us pray for all those who have suffered offences against their human dignity and whose rights have been trampled.

*Silent prayer.*

*Schola* Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

*Archbishop* Lord God, our Father, you created the human being, man and woman, in your image and likeness and you willed the diversity of peoples within the unity of the human family. At times, however, the equality of your sons and daughters has not been acknowledged, and Christians have been guilty of attitudes of rejection and exclusion, consenting to acts of discrimination on the basis of racial and ethnic differences. Forgive us and grant us the grace to heal the wounds still present in your community on account of sin, so that we will all feel ourselves to be your sons and daughters. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*A candle is lit.*

### IV. CONFESSION OF SINS OF PERSONAL RACIAL PREJUDICE

*Deacon* Let us pray that we may all reject racial stereotypes, racial slurs and racial jokes in our thinking and our conversations; and that we might manifest sensitivity to the authentic human values and cultural contributions of each racial grouping in our country.

*Silent prayer.*

*Schola* Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

*Archbishop* Compassionate God, fill our hearts with humility before you and solidarity with all other human beings. Cleanse our minds of false stereotypes of those who differ from us in race or ethnic heritage. Help us to welcome the stranger and the immigrant as brothers and sisters in the one human race. Help us to recognize in all people the presence of your Son, Jesus, who declared that he was to be found especially in the poor and needy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*A candle is lit.*

### V. CONFESSION OF SINS OF RACIAL PREJUDICE WITHIN THE CHURCH

*Deacon* Let us pray that the members of the Church will examine their consciences regarding their attitudes and behaviors toward Blacks, Latinx, Native Americans and Asians. Let us ask pardon for Christian religious institutions who benefited from slavery. May we repudiate all that relegates our brothers and sisters to second-class citizenship in the Church.

*Silent prayer.*

*Schola* Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.



*Archbishop* God of justice, the difficulties of these new times demand a new vision and a renewed courage to transform our Church. May we recognize and reject past instances of racial mistreatment and abuse, intended or unintended, by our Catholic institutions and by our members. Help us to strive for the goal of racial justice with determination and creativity in solidarity with all people of good will. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*A candle is lit.*

## VI. CONFESSION OF SINS OF RACIAL PREJUDICE IN LARGER SOCIETY

*Deacon* Let us pray that racial differences not interfere with our dealing justly and peacefully with all other nations; and that those nations which possess more of the world's riches share, in justice, with those who are in serious need.

*Silent prayer.*

*Schola* Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

*Archbishop* God of all the nations, we confess that institutional or structural racism is embedded in the systems and institutions of society, wherever such systems and institutions are created and maintained in such a way that they provide privilege or prejudice for one race over others. Give us conversion of heart that we pledge ourselves to preserve and defend the rights and dignity of all people, no matter what their race or ethnic heritage is. Through our enthusiastic and prudent cooperation with your Spirit, transform our social, economic, and political structures so that they may more clearly enshrine your vision and will for all people. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*A candle is lit.*

## VII. CONFESSION OF SINS AGAINST CHILDREN

*Deacon* Let us pray for all children who have been neglected, cast off, or even killed because of their racial or ethnic heritage.

*Silent prayer.*

*Schola* Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

*Archbishop* Loving God, you renew your world and your Church with the gift of children. They are so precious in your sight that you have provided each with a guardian angel and have said through your Son: "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these". Send a spirit of repentance and welcome into our hearts that we may provide a home of safety and love for every child and preserve them from infection by sins of racism, selfishness, or egotism. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*A candle is lit.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Deacon* Please rise to pray.

*Archbishop* Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us together offer the prayer Jesus taught us:

*Assembly* **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

## CONCLUDING PRAYER

*Archbishop*

**L**ord, Father of our human family,  
you created all human beings equal in dignity:  
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit  
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,  
dialogue, justice and peace.  
Move us to create healthier societies  
and a more dignified world,  
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.  
May our hearts be open  
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.  
May we recognize the goodness and beauty  
that you have sown in each of us,  
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects,  
and shared dreams.

*Assembly*

**Amen**

## THE CONCLUDING RITES

### BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

*Archbishop* The Lord be with you.

*Assembly* **And with your spirit.**

*Archbishop* Blessed be the name of the Lord.

*Assembly* **Now and for ever.**

*Archbishop* Our help is in the name of the Lord.

*Assembly* **Who made heaven and earth.**

*Deacon* Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

*Silent prayer.*

*Archbishop* May the Lord bless you and keep you.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*Archbishop* May he let his face shine upon you and show you his mercy.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*Archbishop* May he turn his countenance towards you and give you his peace.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*Archbishop* And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, ✠  
and the Holy Spirit dome down on you and remain with you for ever.

*Assembly* **Amen.**

*Deacon* Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

*Assembly* **Thanks be to God.**

CONCLUDING HYMN *Sung by Schola*

*O God of Every Nation*

AURELIA

O God of ev'ry nation, Of ev'ry race and land,  
Redeem your whole creation With your almighty hand;  
Where hate and fear divide us And bitter threats are hurled,  
In love and mercy guide us And heal our strife-torn world.

From search for wealth and power And scorn of truth and right,  
From trust in bombs that shower Destruction through the night,  
From pride of race and station And blindness to your way,  
Deliver ev'ry nation, Eternal God, we pray.

Keep bright in us the vision Of days when wars shall cease,  
When hatred and division Give way to love and peace,  
Till dawns the morning glorious When Christ alone shall reign  
And he shall rule victorious O'er all the world's domain.



CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PAUL  
NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL  
239 Selby Avenue Saint Paul, Minnesota  
651-228-1766

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*Opening Prayer:* Collect from the Mass "For the Progress of Peoples," #29 of the Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions of the *Roman Missal*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America. The English translation and Chants of The Roman Missal © 2010 International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

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Solemn Prayer is based on the "*Universal Prayer of Confession of Sins and Asking for Forgiveness*" authored by St. Paul John Paul II for the 12 March 2000 Millennium "*Day of Pardon*".

Collect taken from Pope Francis' October 3 2020 encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, #287

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