

Conference of Benedictine Prioresses  
February 4, 2017

In the spirit of the centuries-old Rule of Benedict which urges us to *listen with the ear of the heart* and to respect the gifts of each person as unique individuals, we, the Conference of Benedictine Prioresses, recognize the injustices caused by racism in our society. Our communities have made many efforts to address this injustice as a social sin in which we take part. We recognize that our society, culture, and country are at a time when many implications and effects of racism are emerging on every side. The conversion called for is pervasive. In solidarity with other religious/faith leaders, we recognize that racial injustice is social sin –

*To speak of social sin means in the first place to recognize that, by virtue of a human solidarity which is as mysterious and intangible as it is real and concrete, each individual's (and corporate) sin in some way affects others. ...Every sin has repercussions on the entire ecclesial body and the whole human family." Pope John Paul II, December 2, 1984.*

Therefore, at this time in our history, we join with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and with all people of faith to commit ourselves to:

- Examine the root causes of injustice, particularly of racism, as a consequence of unacknowledged white privilege, and our own complicity over the years in this societal reality;
- Work to effect systemic change that will promote a society that respects all people and that recognizes the equality, human dignity and human rights of all.;

We commit ourselves to use our collective voice, resources, and power in collaboration with others to establish racial justice which reflects God's abundant love and mercy.

We recognize the value of:

- Racial solidarity training;
- Creating safe spaces for truth and reconciliation processes;
- Training in nonviolent conflict transformation;
- Programs training unarmed civilian peace makers in our regions;
- Ongoing de-escalation training for police;
- Dialogue with people of color and varied origins.

We pledge:

- Our prayer;
- Educational efforts;
- Advocacy