



OBLATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

May 17, 2022

A Statement on the Killings in Buffalo

The shooting and resulting death of 10 innocent people in Buffalo calls all people of faith and good will to respond in ways that work against the sin that motivated the shooter. By his own words, the shooter expressed a racist desire to kill people of color. He sought out an African American neighborhood, driving hours to prepare and carry out the planned killing of as many non-white people as possible.

The ideology of white supremacy that motivated the shooter in Buffalo also inspired racially motivated shooters in Charlottesville, San Diego, El Paso, Pittsburgh, and New Zealand. Each person who died is a daughter, a son, a mother, a father, a sister, a brother, a family member who is now lost to those who mourn their early departure through violence. Each of them have names that will be remembered by family and friends. We, as people of faith, remember those lost to racially motivated violence and offer our support through pastoral care.

The sinister ideology of white supremacy is rooted in the more basic evil of racism. Racism is a powerful force that has motivated people for centuries. The lie of racism is a sin that cries out for redemption. Today, this lie is constantly promoted to tell white people to fear people of color and to encourage anti-Semitism. The Prince of Lies urges us to continue the lie of racism so it can divide and destroy any sense of common good. People of faith and good will must resist this powerful force that warps truth for the benefit of select few. The God we worship calls people together in truth. Christians are to be known by the love they have for one another and for all people. The lie of racism works to destroy this love.

We pray fervently for those who died, for their families who mourn, for yet another city, the City of Buffalo, that mourns senseless violence. This prayer drives us to act. In our preaching, our teaching, our scholarship, and our pastoral care; we strive to work against the destructive lie of racism. We strive to promote the truth of the gospel that sees all people as gifted by God, as part of the common community brought together in faith.

Our common call to holiness asks us to work toward truth and away from lies; to work together to remove racism as a force that divides and promote unity in the God we know and worship. St. Eugene DeMazenod, founder of the Missionary Oblates, began his ministry by preaching to those societies saw as undesirable. St. Eugene preached that God loved them and he did as well.

We, as Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate who serve the people of Buffalo in pastoral care, and as Oblate School of Theology, a ministry of the Missionary Oblates, pledge to continue preaching this truth proclaimed by St. Eugene, to work toward unity and truth, to eradicate racism in ourselves and work against it wherever it may be found.



Fr. Louis Studer, O.M.I.
Provincial
On behalf of the U.S. Oblate Province



Dr. Scott Woodward
President
On behalf of Oblate School of Theology