Commending the Anglican Church of Canada’s Episcopal Statement on Racism

Dear Friends,

I commend to you the Anglican Church of Canada’s Episcopal Statement concerning racism, issued on June 8, 2020 (attached).

Systemic, intentional and gratuitous racism is a present and persistent reality in all our communities. Racism is both conscious and unconscious, and is always insidious, dehumanizing those who are targeted and those who perpetrate.

Racism is utterly incompatible with the life and teachings of Jesus. We who seek to follow him must be unafraid to cross over the boundaries of denial and repression to hear how racism undermines the dignity of individuals and groups, and to understand our complicity in perpetuating racist structures, language and attitudes.

The video of George Floyd’s violent death gave graphic insight into his final experience of racism, and it has rightly awakened outrage. Making space to hear and listen to racialized brothers and sisters speak of how racism cuts into self-esteem, safety and opportunity is the transformative next step.

Becoming acutely aware of the prevalence of racism in our communities, and in our own actions, words and thoughts, and turning from and rejecting racism in all its forms, is integral to our vocation as followers of Jesus Christ.

To quote my colleague, Bishop Peter Fenty of Toronto: “I believe that we must make a commitment to take action at this time and not just make statements to soothe and placate. Systemic racism is real and negatively impacts the lives of many people. We all must work towards dismantling it. May God give us the grace and courage to do so.”

Amen.

+Shane

The Right Reverend Shane A. D. Parker
Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa

- Déclaration racisme
- Statement on Racism