



NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Dear Catholic School Communities,

As the Superintendent of 19 wonderfully diverse schools, and more importantly, a teacher who is called to form our students into their very best relationship with God, I would be remiss if I did not address in some fashion the tragedy of George Floyd's death which has enveloped us all in anger, confusion, and even fear. As we are created in the image and likeness of God, our humanity deserves to be protected and celebrated. Our ultimate goal on earth is to glorify God in all we do, so as to be happy with Him in heaven. Our actions as students, teachers, family members, citizens of the United States- in every vocation and job held must exist to glorify God and all His creation. To hurt, to enslave, to murder, to abuse, to undervalue, to unjustly imprison all attack the inviolability of human life. We have a responsibility to recognize these injustices and act on them in a peaceful way that teaches our students the innate value and dignity of their own selves in order to understand the value and dignity of every citizen- whether they know them or not. To be a human being is to deserve to be protected. To be a human being is to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

It is therefore a service of love which we are all committed to ensure to our neighbor, that his or her life may be always defended and promoted, especially when it is weak or threatened. It is not only a personal but a social concern which we must all foster: a concern to make unconditional respect for human life the foundation of a renewed society (John Paul II. Encyclical Letter "Evangelium Vitae" (The Gospel of Life): Of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II, to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, Men and Women Religious, Lay Faithful, and All People of Good Will on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life. Pauline Books and Media, 1995).

The transcendentals Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are best understood within the context of the glory of all of God's creation. We know what is right, we are drawn to what is beautiful, and we innately desire to do what is good. As fallen creatures, we do not always embrace what is right and just, but it is our responsibility to keep trying; to find in ourselves what God has already taught us: human life is sacred from conception until natural death.

Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves 'the creative action of God,' and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can, in any circumstance, claim for himself the right to destroy directly an innocent human being (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. "Donum Vitae" On Respect for Human Life at its Origins and for the Dignity of Procreation. (22 February 1987): AAS 80 (1988), 70-102).

It is our responsibility to protect, defend, and celebrate all of God's creation, most especially human beings. George Floyd had innate dignity and value as a human being and the loss of his life is therefore a tragedy for his family, for his community, and for society as a whole. It is now our responsibility to teach our students that George Floyd had value simply because he was a human being. That all of humanity deserves the life that God, as the Creator, has endowed on us. He is the Author of all and we must allow ourselves to be instruments of His will.

As Catholic school educators, we understand that we are working in partnership with you to best form your children. What a blessing to be in a Catholic school where our faith is celebrated and taught in every class. Please help us to continue that conversation about our faith and talk to your children about the sanctity of all life. Do not hesitate to reach out to your local school if you need guidance in that conversation. And please pray for peace in our nation.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Pelletier
Superintendent
Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth