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“We Are All Brothers and Sisters, Asians Too”
Call to Prayer and Action to End Violence and Racism
The Most Rev. Oscar A. Solis
Bishop of Salt Lake City

The senseless killing in Atlanta and the spike of violent racial incidents and hateful sentiments all over the country against our Asian American and Asian and Pacific Islander brothers and sisters once again bring to light the issue of racism.

It was not too long ago when the conscience of our nation was awakened by a series of killings of innocent lives. We witnessed the anger and heard the cries of thousands of people from various sectors of society all over the country who went to the streets in protest of such abhorrent incidents of racial discrimination and condemnation of acts of injustices toward people of color and members of our marginalized minority population.

It is very disheartening how easily people forget the wasted lives of the many victims, the grief of their loved ones and the disruptions and pain our communities suffered. Here we are again.

Now, violence and bigotry again occupy the news and national attention. There are reports of an increase in verbal and physical assault, harassment and racial profiling against Asian Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage. Being a minority in our country has been already a great challenge for them. This was exacerbated by a sharp decline in patronage of the businesses owned and operated by the Asian communities even before the pandemic. The recent racist incidents compound the pain, fear and anxiety in their lives.

The Catholic Church strongly condemns racism and renounce racial discrimination, categorizations or presumptions. I ask our fellow Christians and all people of good will to help stop any attacks and discriminatory attitudes towards others that are contrary to the teachings of Christ and human moral values. Violence and discrimination have no place in America, in our society and in our world. We must instead uphold and fight for the ideals of this great nation, strengthen our fraternal bonds as brothers and sisters, and recognize that each of us is created in the image of God with equal human dignity and rights.

There is still hope. We share a common vision of peace and solidarity as one global humanity. The pandemic highlighted our human goodness in the sacrifices and selflessness of the frontlines, the medical and healthcare workers, and the essential laborers. This can be our strength – to rise above our predicament and to emerge as a renewed and stronger nation, one united American people that places value in every human life regardless of race, beliefs, gender, status in life or sexual orientation.

While we continue to pray fervently for an end to the pandemic, let us join our hearts and hands to promote and maintain peace, and encourage greater appreciation, respect and understanding of each other’s respective cultural heritage. Be beacons and ambassadors of hope for a better world. Pray to God to seek help beyond our means and ourselves that we may finally learn to live together with kindness, respect, love and peace for one another.