IHC Statement on Anti-Racism as Spiritual Transformation

Our nation is at a crossroads, and we are called to an awakening – a metanoia and spiritual transformation. We can either meet the vision of the Beloved Community where the long arc of the Universe at last bends towards justice or we can remain in our current downward spiral of disrespect, inequality and injustice towards persons who are not “white.” As an ecumenical community, we are Christian followers of Jesus, whom we hold to be a model of compassion and inclusionary love,* and we see this moment as one in which we must work to embody that Inclusionary Love.

We believe that the call of this moment is one of radical, universal, inclusionary Love, where we must heal the profound wound of racism and work for a structural and spiritual transformation of ourselves and our nation to acknowledge and empower a recognition of the full dignity and humanity of all persons of color, especially Black persons, in our country.

We Acknowledge and Lament that:

- Our nation was founded on the racism of colonialism in 1492, and the racism of slavery in 1619, and although a Civil War was fought, its basic social structures continue today to uphold policies and practices that prevent the true realization of inherent human dignity for persons of color within our society.
- As a spiritual Community, there have been times when those of us with “white skin” have benefited from the racial caste system of our nation and have failed to treat with equal dignity and respect our own sisters and brothers from Brown, Black and other marginalized communities.
- As individuals, most of us have been raised in a culture with unconscious, implicit bias from which we have materially and socially benefited, but which has spiritually and relationally held us at a distance from people of color and the wholeness of Love that is the ground of all being.

Therefore, We Commit to:

- Pray for an end to racism, for interracial solidarity, and the healing of the fragmentation of our human family.
- Study and understand the profound, historic and religiously condoned systemic racism that has existed since European peoples came to the Americas, and indigenous peoples were dehumanized and persecuted and from 1619 when people from Africa were enslaved in order to build the economic wealth of the colonies and later the nation.
- Build bridges of connectivity by partnering with organizations to work to end systems of “white” domination and preference. We will seek out organizations with leadership based in communities who have suffered from racial prejudice so that we may learn from their experience and work with them to build inclusionary justice and deep appreciation.
- Stand with the disfranchised - Reaching out to people who do not have equal access to truth, dignity and full human development and to strategically change practices and situations that impede such access.
- Reach out in dialogue and respectful conversation with people who disagree with us in order to invite them into healing our divisions and creating a world, based on the common good, where all persons are cherished for their inherent dignity and celebrated for their diversity.
- Advocate support for new social and political policies that protect with compassion the rights and dignity of all persons as created in the image of God. And we will seek to remedy current policies and practices that have excluded persons of color from full participation in the benefits of society, such as housing, full employment, education, and healthcare.

*Italics indicate words taken from “The Spirit Which Calls Us” our collective document of “The Vision and Mission of the Immaculate Heart Community of California.”