A Daily Photo Journal:
In Solidarity and Hope for Racial Justice

"Racism is not merely one sin among many;
it is a radical evil that divides the human family
and denies the new creation of a redeemed world.
To struggle against it demands an equally radical transformation,
in our own minds and hearts as well as in the structure of our society."

— U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Brothers and Sisters to Us*, 1979

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Photographs can powerfully pull us into someone else's experience. As you use this Photo Journal to reflect during this year's Black History Month, think about how you engage with people of different races, ethnicities, and religious affiliations. How do you make your communities a welcome space for all? What are some ways in which you can demonstrate solidarity with marginalized and oppressed groups?

Begin by reflecting on the following two verses:

"There is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free man,
there is neither male nor female;
for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
—Galatians 3:28

"A new commandment I give to you,
that you love one another, even as I have loved you,
that you also love one another."
—John 13:34

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Sunday: Begin by lighting a candle. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? How do the words on the sign, "Stand For Something," call or inspire you to respond to racial injustice? Why is it so important to be an outspoken advocate for justice, for example, taking to the streets in protest like the people in this photo, writing opinion pieces for your local newspaper, posting to social media, or lobbying your representatives? What are some other ways you can stand for justice and be an ally?

. . . My Reflections . . .

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Monday: Begin by lighting a candle. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? The Church has denounced racism and racial discrimination as a sin, with Pope Francis stating, "Racism today is the ultimate sin in our world." How do you think racism can manifest as a crime against humanity? Read the following reflection on Catholic Social Thought and Racism by Fred Kammer, S.J., (http://bit.ly/2jFlyAl). How do faith and Church teachings, such as the dignity of human life, call us to respond to racism? How does your faith shape the way you view racial injustice?

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Tuesday: Begin by lighting a candle. Read the following article from *The New York Times*, "In Tamir Rice Case, Many Errors by Cleveland Police, Then a Fatal One," (http://nyti.ms/2jo3gUQ) for background on the shooting of twelve-year-old Tamir Rice. What do you think this child is thinking and feeling? What words of comfort or hope would you offer her? How do you feel about the fact that there was no indictment (no charges brought against the officers involved) in this case? Say a prayer for all children who have suffered directly or indirectly from racism and police brutality (http://bit.ly/2jFg5cO).

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Wednesday: Begin by lighting a candle. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? Reflect on community-law enforcement relations in your own community. Would you characterize them as positive or negative? Why do you think people of different races often experience or view police interactions differently? Read journalist Shaun King's 25 solutions for police brutality (http://nydn.us/2j56Rr7), written in response to the deaths of Philando Castile and Alton Sterling, and encourage your elected representatives to pursue these policy changes. Consider writing a prayer for the 258 Black individuals killed by police brutality in 2016.

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Thursday: Begin by lighting a candle. What thoughts and emotions does this photo elicit in you? As you pray, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. Reflect on how your views on racial justice have grown and changed over time. Was there a particular event or moment that shocked you into consciousness (e.g., the murder of Trayvon Martin or Michael Brown)? If so, why do you think this was? How can you encourage others in your community to examine their privileges and see racial justice as a crucial issue of our time?

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Friday: Begin by lighting a candle. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? Think about how racism is embedded in our systems and institutions—racism is not limited to individual interactions and beliefs, but perniciously impacts our criminal justice system, poverty, access to education and other services, and social mobility. How can your actions contribute to the work of dismantling systemic and institutional racism?

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Saturday: Begin by lighting a candle. As you look at this photo, what thoughts and emotions does it elicit in you? How does this photo reflect community and solidarity? In an era of political strife and continued racial violence, how can you commit to building bridges rather than walls? How can you engage in conversations with your family members and peers that serve to heal and change hearts, rather than divide and alienate?

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