



**Franciscan Friars
of the Renewal**

Community of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal

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**JESUS WEPT: ON RACISM, THE CALL TO REPENTANCE, AND THE RENDING OF
HEARTS**

On the Feast of the Ugandan Martyrs, St. Charles Lwanga and Companions

“Jesus wept” (John 11:35).

With the broken body of Christ, we too weep. We weep over the tragic death of our brother George Floyd. We weep with his family. We weep with our African American brothers and sisters who must bury and mourn another life tragically and unjustly taken. We weep over the long history of racism, persecution, and injustice which has, and continues to, hurt our brothers and sisters redeemed by the Blood of Christ.

We stand in solidarity with our African American brothers and sisters who desire to speak. We stand in solidarity with those who want their stories to be heard. We support the right of all peoples to protest peacefully. We recognize that passivity in the face of racism is a sin of omission for which we are accountable before God and is in direct contradiction with an authentically prolific worldview. We confirm what is taught by the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “Solidarity is an eminently Christian virtue” (CCC 1948). We exhort all people to dialogue, to listen deeply, to prayer, to penance, and to Spirit led action in their families, communities, and society.

We echo the words of St. Paul, “Let love be genuine. Hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good” (Rm. 12:9-10). We denounce violence as the path to authentic peace. We denounce those individuals who are spreading darkness and pain through their crimes of vandalism, looting, and violence. We mourn with those innocent men and women, of all races and creeds, who have had their lives taken or livelihood jeopardized by these despicable acts. We exhort all men and women of good will to not dismiss the true message of the many because of the sins of a few.

We recognize and emphatically encourage social change at all levels of our society. Without justice, there will be no peace. First and foremost, we ask all of our brothers and sisters to turn to our Father in heaven. The rending of garments without the rending of hearts is futile. May God place within each of us, our communities, our countries, and our world, a new heart and a new spirit. May he give us his peace.

St. Charles Lwanga and Companions, pray for us.

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