Memo To: Priests and Deacons

From: Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann

Date: July 13, 2020

Regarding: USCCB Tools for Understanding the term: Systemic Racism and Racism

And the Criminal Justice System

In addressing the issue of racism in preaching, I hope you find these two brief resources from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) helpful. While acknowledging and celebrating the progress that has been made in overcoming racism in our society, it is important to help our parishioners understand how institutional racism of the past is still impacting the lives and the opportunities available to many African-Americans and members of other minority communities today. The fact that many of us live in homogenous communities prevents opportunities for helpful interaction across racial and ethnic differences.

The Church has a responsibility to heighten the moral awareness of our parishioners about the harm that lingering racism causes in the lives of individuals and society. We must remind our people of the fundamental truth of our Catholic Faith that each and every person is created in the image of God and is of such worth that Jesus gave His life on Calvary.