

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

**SOURCE: DWELL IN MY LOVE, A PASTORAL LETTER ON RACISM
BY FRANCIS CARDINAL GEORGE**

GOD, THE CREATOR

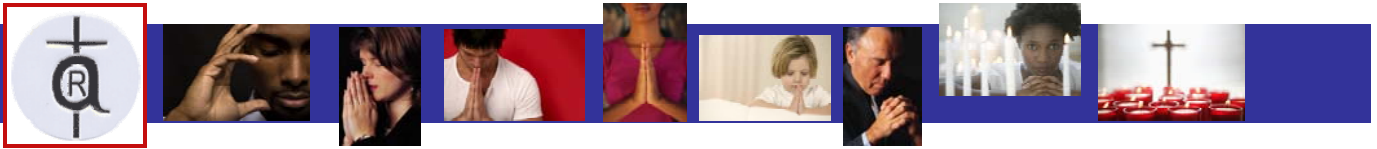
*Genesis*1: 26-27, 31

God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them...and God saw everything that he had made, and it was very good...

The book of Genesis reveals God as the Creator of a vast universe teeming with a rich diversity of plants and animals, surrounded by the sea and sky. The rising and setting of the sun and moon marks off the rhythm of creation's life. A God whose own being and goodness generated more being and goodness called creation into being separate from himself and yet intrinsically dependent upon him. United in the dynamics and mutual self-giving of their life as God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit create out of infinite love the universe and all that fills it. According to the book of Genesis, the culmination and high point of God's creative energy is the creation of the human race on the sixth day.

Though God intended that all creation live in the harmony and love that unites it as one, human beings, exercising their free will, defied the will of God and replaced the divinely planned harmony with division, the divinely willed unity with conflict, the divinely intended community with fragmentation. One form of human division, conflict and fragmentation is racism: personal, social, institutional and structural. Racism mars our identity as a people, as the human race made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27). The 1979 U.S. Bishops' pastoral on racism teaches that "racism is a sin: a sin that divides the human family, blots out the image of God among specific members of that family, and violates the fundamental human dignity of those called to be children of the same Father."⁴

⁴ Ibid.



SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

**SOURCE: DWELL IN MY LOVE, A PASTORAL LETTER ON RACISM
BY FRANCIS CARDINAL GEORGE**

JESUS, THE LORD

John 17:20-22

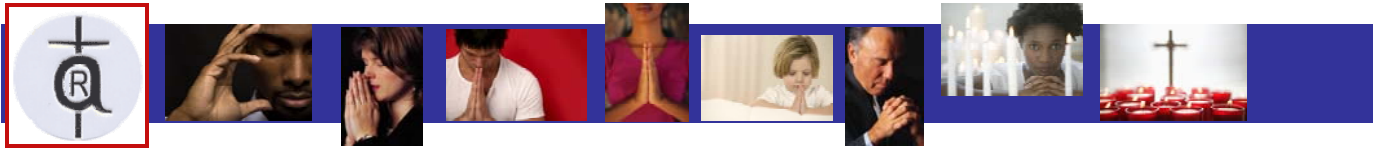
May they all be one as you, Father are in me and I in you. So also may they be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. The glory which you gave me I have given to them, that they may be one, as we are one; I in them and you in me, may they be perfectly one. Then the world will know that you sent me, and that you loved them as you loved me.

Jesus, the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, entered human history two millennia ago. When Jesus came into the world, his people, God's people, the Jewish people, were a conquered people, often despised by their foreign rulers. Jesus gave us the means to find our way back to his Father, whom he taught us to call our Father. Jesus, the new Adam, went to his death on the sixth day to recreate us by redeeming us from sin and Satan. We are again to walk in unity, as one people enjoying the variety of plants, animals and human cultures, which constitute the world redeemed by Christ. Through his preaching and healing, through the pattern of discipleship he called people to follow, through his bodily resurrection from the dead, the Lord Jesus literally embodies for us a new way of life, which conforms to the will and reign of God. Jesus transcends, challenges and transforms everything that divides the human community (Gal. 3:28). He calls us back to a communion with one another, a unity, which reflects the communion of God's own Trinitarian life.

Racism, whether personal, social, institutional or structural, contradicts the purpose of the incarnation of the Word of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Racism contradicts God's will for our salvation. We cannot claim to love God without loving our neighbor (Mat.22: 34 ff.). Since racism is a failure to love our neighbor, only freedom from racism will enable us to be one with God and one another.⁵

(#4-5)

⁵ Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, An Apostolic Exhortation to the bishops, priests and faithful of the entire Catholic Church on Evangelization in the Modern World, 9.



SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

**SOURCE: DWELL IN MY LOVE, A PASTORAL LETTER ON
RACISM
BY FRANCIS CARDINAL GEORGE**

THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 15:26-27

When the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father — the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father — he will bear witness to me. And you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning.

The vision of a community dwelling in God's unconditional and universal love may sound like an impossible dream, but in God all things are possible (Mark 10:27). The radical conversion needed to overcome the sin of racism is made possible by the Holy Spirit. Sent by the risen Christ, the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts and in our midst to empower us to live truly as God's people. By the power of the Holy Spirit acting in us, we can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine (Eph. 3:20). Jesus assured his disciples that the abiding presence of the Spirit would empower them to be faithful.

(#5)