“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

— Galatians 3:28

Having lived in Minneapolis twice during my years as a Dominican priest, I shopped at many of the retail stores and I walked by some of the restaurants that were looted and burned after the unjustified and tragic death of George Floyd. Together we are witnessing varied responses some of which are sincere and peaceful and others that are disturbing and violent.

But what is my personal response, not to what I am witnessing, but to the cause of death suffered by George Floyd?

- Have I done enough to inform myself about the sin of racism, its roots, and its historical and contemporary manifestations? Have I opened my heart to see how unequal access to economic opportunity, jobs, housing, and education on the basis of skin color, race, or ethnicity, has denied and continues to deny the equal dignity of others? Is there a root of racism within me that blinds my vision of who my neighbor is?
- Have I ever witnessed an occasion when someone “fell victim” to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism and I did or said nothing, leaving the victim to address their pain alone? Have I ever witnessed an occasion when someone “fell victim” to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism with me inflicting the pain, acting opposite of love of God and love of neighbor?
- Have I ever lifted up and aided a person who “fell victim” to personal, institutional, systematic or social racism and paid a price for extending mercy to the other? How did I react? Did my faith grow? Am I willing to grow even more in faith through my actions?

(Engaging in a “Racial Examination of Conscience” by To Go Forth from the USCCB, Department of Justice, Peace, & Human Development — inspired by Pope Francis https://usccb.org/2017/12/28/engaging-in-a-racial-examination-of-conscience/)

Sincerely in the risen Christ,
Fr. Bob Kelly, OP

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