



## COPTIC ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

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June 3, 2020

### Statement on the Death of Mr. George Floyd

On behalf of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States, we firmly denounce the brutal treatment that led to the callous death of a black man, Mr. George Floyd. It is appalling to witness this kind of hate crime at the hands of those entrusted to protect all the people of the land. This sin would have gone unnoticed, as without a doubt, sadly, many others had. God revealed this atrocity because He is also demanding change and justice for all. We offer our heartfelt prayers and strongly stand with Mr. Floyd's family and the peace-loving citizens of this great nation expecting long, overdue justice.

"One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," is the most beautiful and profound message embedded in the Pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America. This inspiring statement brings us together in peaceful eras and in the perils of disasters. It is clear that at this point in time the wound is too deep that even a pandemic could not halt the outrage of citizens in our country and shared grief by citizens all around the world to demand justice for the death of another black man, Mr. George Floyd, in the cruel hands of law enforcement. It is not just another day at work anymore. This time, the world witnessed and everyone's heart ached. Enough!

We pray for our leaders in the Divine Liturgy, irrespective of our individual voting preferences and who is elected. What happens when authorities abuse their power? There are no biblical passages that condone brutality, corruption, or violence, especially by those in power. It takes courage to protest and stand up for what is right. It is important to use our voices together to demand change and justice. The manner of protest must not parallel the crime. Innocent people should not become victims to anyone's misery and lose their businesses, properties, and in some cases, their own lives in senseless riots. Who will protest on their behalf?



**Bishop Youssef**

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We must remember that most of law enforcement is on the side of the people and are protecting us from much harm. Our elected officials need our prayers so that they may make wise and just decisions with fairness and equality for all citizens. When the Lord's disciples were faced with a challenge, they retreated together and prayed with one accord (Acts 2:1). We need not to politicize every situation. When it is time to elect our officials, we must look at all their policies and stances on major issues. Now is the time to help our nation heal. The rioting and looting must stop so the voices of reason can be heard and justice can prevail. Now is the time to come together with one accord.

Oneness is the sound of harmony in a lovely symphony and the grandest orchestra and the finest choir. Oneness is the beauty of colors converging together onto a blank canvas and telling a unique story. Oneness is fields of flowers and towering trees piecing together a landscape that meets the horizon. Oneness values independence without mocking differences nor compromising one's belief system. Nature's landscape glorifies God in its varying branches, leaves, blossoms, hills, valleys, rivers, and seas. We can have our differences respectfully, but we must remain one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Let us pursue change with justice. Let us pursue justice with wisdom. Let us pursue wisdom with love. Let us pursue love with forgiveness. Let us pursue forgiveness with hope. Let us hope for peace. Let us "seek peace and pursue it" (Psalm 34:14).

May the Lord heal and restore this blessed nation under His loving guidance and tender care.

Bishop Youssef  
Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

Bishop Basil

Bishop Gregory