

origins

CNS documentary service

Reactions to Killing of George Floyd by Police

Catholic Leaders

After George Floyd was killed while in police custody, the United States saw more than a week of protests and unrest. A police officer was filmed kneeling on Floyd's neck during an arrest in Minneapolis. Video of the May 25 incident showed a white police officer with his knee on Floyd's neck for several minutes as he struggled for breath and pleaded for the officer to stop. Subsequent video showed two other officers on top of Floyd, an unarmed African American. The first officer was arrested May 29, and on June 3, charges against him were upgraded to second-degree murder, and the two other officers, and a bystander officer were charged with aiding and abet-

"The killing of George Floyd was senseless and brutal, a sin that cries out to heaven for justice."

ting murder; all were fired May 26. Starting in Minneapolis May 26 and spreading throughout the nation and the world, protests against police brutality and killings of black people grew, as almost every major city in America saw large daily protests. After nightfall, some protests turned violent and looting took place in many areas. There was widespread anger as Floyd's killing came on the heels of other killings of unarmed African Americans by police and the lack of police reform as these killings happened again and again throughout the country over many years. The coronavirus pandemic that hit communities of color harder than white communities also spotlighted inequalities in American life. On June 1, White House officials ordered police to attack peaceful protestors outside the White House. Catholic leaders responded to all these events with statements, homilies and tweets. A sampling of these follow.

Archbishop José H. Gomez USCCB president

the killing of George Floyd was senseless and brutal, a sin that cries out to heaven for justice. How is it possible that in America a black man's life can be taken from him while calls for help are not answered and his killing is recorded as it happens?

I am praying for George Floyd and his loved ones, and on behalf of my brother bishops, I share the outrage of the black community and those who stand with them in Minneapolis, Los Angeles and across the

continued on page 106

contents

- 105 Reactions to Killing of George Floyd by Police by Archbishop José H. Gomez; the National Black Sisters' Conference; Bishop Robert W. McElroy; the Knights of Peter Claver and Ladies Auxiliary; Reynold Verret; Seven USCCB Committee Chairmen; Cardinal Blase J. Cupich; Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory; John J. DeGioia; Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley; Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ; Father Joseph M. McShane, SJ; Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer, OFM, Conv; Bishop Curtis J. Guillery, SVD; Bishop Anthony B. Taylor; Archbishop Paul D. Etienne; Bishop Edward K. Braxton; Bishop Robert J. Brennan; Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr; Bishop Gerald R. Barnes; and Archbishop Oscar A. Solis
- 120 Datebook
- 120 On File

June 11, 2020
Volume 50
Number 7



2249A