

RACISM

John Paul Speaks

*Notable quotations from Pope John Paul II and
official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church*

“A STRONG VOICE”

“I come to gather nations of every language; they shall come and see My glory” (Is 66:18). The word of the prophet Isaiah ... makes me think of the important international meeting ... the *UN World Conference Against Racial Discrimination*. There, once again, the Church will raise a strong voice to safeguard the fundamental rights of man, rooted in his dignity of being created in the image and likeness of God.

“SERIOUSLY THREATENED”

In the last decades, characterized by the phenomenon of globalization and marked by the worrying resurgence of aggressive nationalism, ethnic violence and widespread phenomena of racial discrimination, human dignity has often been seriously threatened.

“DECISIVELY CONDEMN ANY RACISM”

Every upright conscience cannot but decisively condemn any racism, no matter in what heart or place it is found. Unfortunately, it emerges in ever new and unexpected ways, offending and degrading the human family.

“A SERIOUS OFFENSE AGAINST GOD”

Racism is a sin that constitutes a serious offense against God.

“FOREIGN TO THE WILL OF CHRIST”

The Second Vatican Council reminds us that “We cannot truly pray to God the Father of all if we treat any people in other than brotherly fashion, for all men are created in the image of God... Therefore, the Church reproves as foreign to the will of Christ, any discrimination against people or any persecution of them on the basis of their race, color, social condition or religion” (*Nostra aetate*, n. 5).

“SOLIDARITY AND PEACE”

To oppose racism we must practice the culture of reciprocal acceptance, recognizing in every man and woman a brother or sister with whom we walk in solidarity and peace.

“A VAST WORK OF EDUCATION”

There is a need for a vast work of education to the values that exalt the dignity of the human person and safeguard his fundamental rights.

THE PRIMACY OF PRAYER

The Church intends to continue her efforts in this area, and asks all believers to make their own responsible contributions of conversion of heart, sensitization and formation. First of all, prayer is necessary to achieve this.

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