

Catholic Diocese of Arlington, Bishop Michael F. Burbidge

Demonstrations and violent protests have broken out in cities throughout the country following the police-involved Memorial Day death of George Floyd, a Minneapolis security guard, father, son, and friend to many. Video of Mr. Floyd being slowly strangled to death was horrifying to witness and particularly painful for his family, friends, and members of the African American community. As a nation, we continue to mourn the death of Mr. Floyd and accompany his family in their grief.

Since then, the four police officers involved in the death have been fired and the officer who knelt on Mr. Floyd' neck has been charged with murder and manslaughter. I join with law enforcement leaders nationwide who have rightfully denounced this abusive use of force and power. As a people of faith and as a nation of laws, we always work to assure justice.

Given the particular gravity and impact of this tragic event, that process must be prioritized, as it will symbolize for all citizens that such acts of brutality are unbecoming of law enforcement officers and below our national decency. However, the looting, vandalism, and violence we are witnessing in Minneapolis and throughout our nation dishonors the legacy of Mr. Floyd and further complicates a tragic situation.

I ask all in the Diocese of Arlington to pray for the repose of the soul of Mr. Floyd, as well as for his family and friends who are undoubtedly grieving and mourning at this time. May we also pray that we who are rightfully outraged by what has transpired will be guided to address effectively and peacefully the wrongs committed and to work together in restoring justice, peace, and harmony throughout our nation and in all of our communities.