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New York, N.Y. 10011
September 24, 2020

Most Reverend Louis F. Kihneman, III, Bishop of Biloxi, Mississippi
1790 Popps Ferry Road
Biloxi, Mississippi 39532

Most Reverend Joseph R. Kopacz, C.C., Bishop of Jackson, Mississippi
257 East Amite
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

Your Excellencies:

As members of the racial justice ministry at the Church of St. Francis Xavier in New York City, we are writing to thank you wholeheartedly for your letter of July 4, 2020, in which you condemn so eloquently the plague of racism in our country. We too are trying to confront the sin that is racism and to work for its eradication.

As you recognize, the “original sin” of slavery continues its corrosive effect on us. It is all too appropriate that you chose the anniversary of the founding of our country for your statement. Your practical suggestions and goals are most helpful in moving us forward. You have courageously modelled for all of us the spirit of justice and mercy.

While our group is particularly focused on racial justice, every ministry in our parish includes it as part of its mission, including following practices you recommend and those of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism. We understand that the Gospel compels us to do so, and consider it an essential element of respect for life. We accept the urging of Pope St. John Paul II to “put an end to every form of racism.” We honor the message of the USCCB in its 2018 pastoral letter, “Open Wide Our Hearts.” And we find inspiration in the life and words of Sister Thea Bowman.

You remind us that the Catholic Church can and should lead people of good will to the necessary reforms. We are heartened to hear your voices, together with those of other American bishops who see the truth and are prepared to

take action. We seek to join with you in the much-needed reformation of our Church and our country.

May the Lord reward your efforts to guide all of us toward greater love for all our sisters and brothers.

Respectfully,

Anne Abbott	Elizabeth Davey	Timothy O'Connor
John Albanese	Moirra Egan	Adel O'Regan
Margaret Becker	Mary Elwood	Nancy Pasley
Roseann Bonadia	Susan Forbes	Edward Poliandro
Robert ChoiniereD.Min.	Stacy Fitzsimmons	Dolores Roddy
Ruth Clark	Ann Harris-Jacobs	Sharon Russo
Belinda Conway	Claire Igot	Charles Scardino
Lynn Corwin	Anita Jongco	Ethelyn Labissiere Smyley
Una Cote	William Koss	Eleanor Sundaram
Angie Cruz	Danila Mendoza	

Cc: Fr. Kenneth Boller, S.J., Pastor, St. Francis Xavier
Fr. John P. Mulreaney, S.J., Assistant Pastor, St. Francis Xavier
Very Rev. Timothy M. Dolan, Archbishop of New York
Very Rev. Jose Horatio Gomez, Archbishop of Los Angeles