

Homily – July 12, 2020

A few weeks ago an article appeared on the editorial page of the Times Union. It was written by a Lutheran Pastor. She wrote that a Lutheran church had placed a sign in front of the church which said “Black Lives Matter”. Not long after the Pastor of the church received a message which read, “If you don’t remove that sign I will not be coming to your Strawberry Festival.” The Pastor called the church Council together to discuss the situation. The Council voted 10 to 4 in favor of removing the “Black Lives Matter” sign.

Last week we received an e-mail which read, ‘I was very disappointed when I saw the signage on the front door of the Shrine Church this week “Black Lives Matter to Us”, it sends a wrong message and politics should not be part of the Church.

Surely at this time in the United States racism is a hot button issue. What are we to think? What are we to do?

Last month Pope Francis spoke of his great concern over the social unrest in the United States following the death of George Floyd: “Dear brothers and sisters in the US we cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life. Any Catholic who claims to defend the sacredness of every human life must combat racism.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops are calling racism a real and present danger. They tell us, “We are brokenhearted, sickened and outraged to watch another video of an African American man being killed before our very eyes. This is the latest wake-up call that needs to be answered by each of us in a spirit of determined conversion.”

So what are we to do? Take down the sign on the front door of our Church “Black Lives Matter to Us”? Much more than a political issue, racism is a spiritual, a moral issue. Every one of us; black, brown, white, yellow is made in the image and likeness of God.

The 10 Commandments tell us, “Love your neighbor as yourself”.

This Commandment becomes ever so real as we receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.