



April 20, 2021

Dear Members of the University Community,

Late this afternoon, a Minneapolis jury returned a guilty verdict on all counts in the trial of Derek Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd. As the trial unfolded on national television, it reminded us of the outrage and anguish that followed the murder of Mr. Floyd at the hands of police last May. While justice was served with today's guilty verdict, it does not remove this pain and anger. We join so many across our nation today in praying that it provides a path for peace, justice and action.

Campus Ministry, the Cross Cultural Centers and the Office of Equity & Diversity are collaborating to conduct "Giving Voice to the Silenced," a prayer vigil on May 4 (rain date of May 5) on the Dionne Green from 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. As a University committed to *cura personalis*, education and social justice, we want to provide time and space to mourn, express our feelings, support each other, and work toward a better future. Students, faculty and staff can visit for any amount of time in prayer, reflection and solidarity as we remember Mr. Floyd and so many others whose lives were cut short as a tragic consequence of systemic racism and oppression in our nation.

As Father Pilarz noted last June, "As a university, we seek truth. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, we insist that truth be accompanied by freedom, justice and love." We must as a University continue to build a community in which all are welcome and thrive without fear or prejudice. We will educate ourselves and improve the culture and systems at The University of Scranton for equity and inclusion.

At this time, I ask that we pray for Mr. Floyd and his family, for the people of Minneapolis and for persons everywhere who face injustice and violence in their lives and in their communities.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gingerich, Ph.D.
Acting President
Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs