



**On Monday, June 1, His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago made the following statement:**

Like so many of you, it was with heartache, confusion and outrage that I watched the images of a white police officer, whose duty is to “serve and protect,” kneeling on the neck of a black man, George Floyd, who lay subdued and prostrated on the street, as his dignity, rights and life were slowly extinguished. It was shocking and devastating to witness a fellow human being begging for breath in the face of callous disregard for human life. This heart-wrenching injustice has now set our communities on fire, and alongside peaceful protests calling for much needed change, we have seen violent confrontation, looting and property destruction.

We call for an immediate end to the violence and for calm, but we must heed another call—our calling to responsible action. As children of God, Orthodox Christians and Americans, we cannot allow dehumanizing acts and the insidious plague of racism to continue in our country, dividing us from one another and separating us from God. In words that are just as true today, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. concluded, “[c]ertain conditions continue to exist in our society, which must be condemned as vigorously as we condemn riots. But in the final analysis, a riot is the language of the unheard ... And as long as America postpones justice, we stand in the position of having these recurrences of violence and riots over and over again.”

I call upon Orthodox Christians in the Holy Metropolis of Chicago to do the hard work that this moment in history demands. Grieve with the victims of injustice, pray for those gripped by hate and fear, protest peacefully against injustice, advocate for the under-served, rebuild destroyed communities and, above all, extend unconditional love and mercy. We are all complicit in the suffering of our neighbor, and we must all repent—transforming our way of seeing, thinking, and acting toward Christ-likeness.

Doing the hard work of repentance is the very essence of being a Christian and, to that end, we must prayerfully take up our crosses and begin, today, to reconcile with God and our fellow human beings. Our rights, our nation and our salvation depend on it.

#### **About the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago**

Tracing its roots back to 1923, the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago is the diocese of Greek Orthodox faithful in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, northern Indiana, and southeastern Missouri, consisting of 58 parishes and two monastic communities. The Metropolis is one of nine regions in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and is presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael. The general offices of the Metropolis are temporarily located in Lombard, Illinois. For more information and to get involved, visit our [website](#), join a [Strategic Planning Team](#), sign up to receive [Metropolis news](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

For Media Inquiries Only:

Chris Varones

312-213-3887

[chris.varones@aesopgroup.com](mailto:chris.varones@aesopgroup.com)