



Solidarity Statement

June 2020



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.

- Pope Francis

While our Santa Clara High School community continues to navigate through an experience like no other, struggling with the financial and emotional impacts of the pandemic, we now face profound sadness and pain as we witness the brutal violence and injustice taking place in our nation and across the world. The recent and senseless murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, the plight of migrant families being cruelly persecuted and separated, and the hatred and racial bias against our Asian brothers and sisters leave us spiritually wounded. **As Catholics, we believe in the sanctity of life, and our school charism energizes us to live in faith through hospitality, charity, simplicity, and joy.**

In this sorrowful time, we look to our faith for healing and reconciliation. We pray for the lives lost, for the families broken in heart and spirit, and we pray for the courage and grace to stand with those who champion freedom, justice, and equality.

Santa Clara High School denounces all systems of institutional oppression that devalue the lives of those most vulnerable. We stand in solidarity and kinship with the disenfranchised, the stigmatized, and are committed to making sure no life is erased, but rather lifted and illuminated.

Call to Action: A Place at the Table

Catholic Social Teaching calls us to protect human dignity, promote the common good, stand with the disempowered, and build relationships of love and justice. As Catholic educators, we lead by example, and share the journey with our students to foster an inclusive environment where they see God in all things. We embolden our students to answer the call to stand with the suffering and elevate their voices.



Despite the turbulence and tragedy surrounding us, we see hope in the resiliency, perseverance, and nimble thinking that our students have shown during the pandemic. We require their dialogue, participation, and optimism **today** to realize their greatest potential as leaders of tomorrow. We must walk with them and empower them to be true champions for change.

We are committed to support our students with the following actions:

Active Listening

Establish a Student Advisory Program to create a safe and open forum for students to engage in rich, deep, and uncomfortable conversations but to also celebrate cultures and individuality, dismantle prejudices and connect authentically.

Intentional Learning

- Ensure and incorporate relevant social justice oriented curriculum for history, english and religion courses.
- Provide Justice-oriented professional development for teachers.
- Promote civic consciousness, and provide resources to facilitate meaningful learnings about racial justice, climate justice, LGBTQ+, conscious consumerism, and social inequities.

Transformative Love and Kinship

Fr. Gregory Boyle, S.J. asks us to "stand in the circle of compassion...moving ourselves closer to the margins so that the margins themselves will be erased."

We must ignite the call of active service in our students, so they make grow in empathy, compassion, and love. We pledge to create dynamic and diverse service project opportunities that will bridge their classroom learning with active local and global community engagement that moves beyond volunteer work to social transformation.

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May we find comfort in these uncertain times knowing that God is ALWAYS our source of protection, strength, and peace.