

August 15, 2017

Dear Members of the College Community,

This past weekend, many of us watched the nationally covered scenes of hatred and violence during the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. White nationalists were protesting the City’s plan to remove a statue memorializing Robert E. Lee, Confederacy’s top general, with counter-protestors there to present a contrary perspective. While we value everyone’s right to free speech and peaceful protest, we are saddened that such would lead to horrific violence resulting in the death of three and more than 30 injured.

The happenings of this past weekend in Charlottesville, Virginia are both mind numbing and soul chilling. While we recognize that those who chose this course of action are also our brothers and sisters, made in the image of God, nevertheless, we must condemn the attitudes and actions of those who are White Supremacists, Neo-Nazis, members of the Klu Klux Klan, and other hate groups. Their beliefs and agendas are a direct contradiction of Judeo-Christian values, principles, and social teachings.

It is time, indeed it is long past time, for us as a country to name the underlying fears that are the source of this racism and to address them courageously and resolutely. Individually and collectively, a rigorous and honest examination of conscience is in order. As citizens, we need to consider the freedoms and rights guaranteed by our Constitution and the obligations placed upon us to insure liberty, justice, and freedom for all people. As women and men of God, we need to examine our consciences on the values and teachings found in the sacred texts of our chosen religions. Each and all of us together have work to do if this nation is to eradicate racism so that we can live together in peace, harmony, and mutual respect. It is time to commit ourselves to this difficult work. The present demands it of us, the future requires it of us.

As stated in our core values, Chestnut Hill College supports the holistic pursuit of truth, integrity and justice as a diverse and inclusive community that affirms human dignity; fosters a friendly and open atmosphere, where all are welcome; and exhibits respect for all members of the global community. We ask our College Community to continue to embrace and to uphold these values.

We share in and feel the pain of Charlottesville, specifically, and the nation, as we are all affected when these tragedies occur. Our prayers are extended to the families of those who lost their lives, those who were injured, the Charlottesville area, our alumni in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and our nation.

God bless you and our beloved country,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol Jean Vale, SSJ". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Sister Carol Jean Vale, SSJ, Ph.D.
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Juliana M. Mosley". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Juliana M. Mosley, Ph.D.
College Officer for Diversity & Inclusion