

Subject: The University of Scranton: No Place for Hatred, Bigotry and Racism
Date: Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 5:54:55 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Rev. Scott R. Pilarz S.J. <scott.pilarz@scranton.edu>
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Dear Members of The University of Scranton Family,

On Tuesday, I wrote to you to express our shared outrage and anguish at the murder of George Floyd and to call us all both to be a source for peace and healing and also to search our own hearts for the “shadow of racism and indifference.” We stand in solidarity with the African American community and with all persons of color.

We are aware of social media posts with allegations concerning current students. The University does not and will not discuss the behavior of individual students. At the same time, I want to state here strongly that hatred, bigotry and racism run contrary to who we are as a Catholic and Jesuit university and are not tolerated on our campus.

Nevertheless, as I said on Tuesday, this is a call to action, and we must act. Through several important, campus-wide efforts we have determined that diversity and inclusion must remain a priority for us. This theme runs strongly, for example, through the strategic plan we are preparing to present to our Board of Trustees for approval in September.

We are not waiting until September to move forward. Student Life was already considering new ways for our students to support and engage each other. Academic Affairs and the Office of Equity and Diversity, for example, are also continuing various initiatives to advance our diversity and inclusivity efforts. Among these steps are many that we already had in place and have been committed to enhancing, including policies, education, professional development, student orientation and hiring.

Finally, I want in a special way to speak to the African American members of our community. I can only imagine how this past week has affected you. Please know that you are in my prayers. Although technology can do many things, I prefer to spend time with you in person when campus reopens, listening and learning from your thoughts and experiences. In the meantime, I continue to urge the entire University community to pray, speak out and act for justice, equality and greater sensitivity. The promotion of justice in particular is central to our Jesuit mission and identity.

God bless you all.

Sincerely,

Scott R. Pilarz, S.J.
President