



Stand Against Racism

- a statement from the OFM Trustees

'Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.' (Hebrews 4:13)

'Words mean nothing if they are not accompanied by actions that bring an end to racism in the Church' (Revd Kunle Ayodeji)

Christ calls us all to live lives of honesty, repentance and integrity; to model our hearts and actions after his example, and to strive at all times for justice and freedom from everything that oppresses or destroys. At *On Fire Mission*, we acknowledge that we have frequently done too little to actively challenge structural and personal injustice, particularly in relation to nurturing and learning from the faith, leadership and gifts of our Black and Asian brothers and sisters, and our siblings from other minority ethnic backgrounds.

Today, we wish to make it clear that we stand against racism in all its forms, and commit to examining ourselves and our structures afresh in order to eradicate and repair the damage done by racism. We will also work to acknowledge and change unconscious bias within ourselves and the wider OFM network. We seek the help of white Christians among our number in keeping us accountable, so that this burden does not fall to those already exhausted from having to advocate for themselves against systems which have silenced their voices or marginalised their experiences.

We thank God that OFM is becoming an increasingly diverse network and community, seeking to witness to the transforming love of God; but we acknowledge that there is much still to do, especially in actively fighting for an end to people being deprived of their rights, voice or status based on ethnicity. The OFM community have been deeply blessed by the ministry of lay and ordained leaders and teachers who are Black, Asian or from other minority ethnic backgrounds, but we must do more to change our ways of working in order to guarantee that no one voice is ever considered more important than another.

To do this we will need to listen, watch and read more carefully to deepen our understanding, and to ensure that God's glorious diversity is more fully represented within our leadership at national and regional levels, both in person and online.

We pray that in this, as in all things, the Holy Spirit will be our guide and will renew and transform us into a more just, Kingdom-shaped community, with the courage and humility to change.



Five Actions OFM Trustees Will Take:

The OFM Trustees will:

- **A**ctively seek the voices and input of Black and Asian Christians and those from other minority ethnic communities at all levels of our organisation (including as speakers, liturgical leaders, and in governance)
- **B**e prepared to have difficult conversations within and beyond the OFM network, and to make changes to our policies and practices in order to reflect a more actively anti-racist way of working
- **C**reate opportunities for OFM network members and leaders to share their experiences, and commit to listening carefully to these experiences and feedback
- **D**iversify the content shared on our social media platforms; paying special attention to the representation of images of God and authors of theological content
- **E**nsure that all involved in the leadership of OFM (including Trustees, C.O.G. and Regional Representatives) undertake regular unconscious bias training (at least every three years)