

Archbishop Lori Calls for Prayers for Gray Family, Peaceful Community Response as Investigations Into Death of Freddie Gray Continue

Archbishop William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore, today issued the following statement in response to this weekend's protests and the tragic death of Freddie Gray:

Today, many in our City are trying to come to grips with the aftermath of an emotional and sometimes-violent weekend that threatens to overshadow two realities that cannot and should not be lost: a family's devastating loss of a young man whose body will be laid to rest today, and a grieving community's peaceful quest for answers and justice.

Our hearts cannot help but go out to the loved ones of Freddie Gray, whose pain and anguish we will share as they say their final farewells to a son, brother, nephew, and cousin. Freddie was not merely a symbol, but a real person whose life was tragically cut short. Sadly, it is a pain that far too many other Baltimore families have had to endure and will have to endure, so long as senseless violence and hatred continue.

But Freddie's death is especially tragic because of the circumstances that led to it, and the pain of his loved ones is all the more acute because of what his death represents not only for them, but for so many others in our community who may not have known Freddie. For Freddie's death symbolizes the rawest of open wounds and the only salve that will heal them is that of truth: truth about what happened to Freddie, truth about the sin of racism that is still present in our community, and truth about our collective responsibility to deal with those issues that undermine the human dignity of every citizen.

As we await the truth, today I ask the faithful of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and all people of good will to join me in praying for the Gray family and for all families devastated by the untimely death of a child of God. Let us pray together for the people of our community, for those in law enforcement who approach their job with dignity and honesty and goodness, and for those investigating Freddie's death, that their investigations will be swift, thorough, open, and honest, and that it will help our community to find ways to address systemic issues. May we unite in prayer for immediate and lasting healing, especially between members of our community and law enforcement, brought about by dialogue, mutual respect and understanding. We pray that following today's funeral and in the days to come, protesters will voice their views freely and openly but without violence, which only deepens and prolongs injustice. And finally, may we pray together that God will grace us always with His presence, so that our broken City can once again be whole and that our minds and our hearts will be open to peace and love.