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**ARCHBISHOP NELSON J. PÉREZ ISSUES STATEMENT
FOLLOWING THE VERDICT IN THE TRIAL OF DEREK CHAUVIN**

The anguish, grief, and fear that consumed our country last spring following the tragic and disturbing death of George Floyd was overwhelming. In the immediate aftermath, old wounds were ripped wide open as the mortal sin of racism cut through our communities.

As a people of faith, Catholics believe that every life holds value and should be treated with dignity. In the name of the people of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, I share in the continued pain and sadness felt by so many.

Almost a year later, former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin's trial has ended. Today's verdict will usher in a wide variety of reactions. I entreat all people to treat each other with respect, charity, and good will as they process the news in their own way.

Regardless of individual points of view, it is imperative to remember that criminal justice is a matter for the courts alone. Ensuring social justice, on the other hand, is a common responsibility that we all share. While the trial has concluded, the struggle to eradicate hatred is ongoing. Our God challenges us to love our neighbors with open hearts and to see Christ's presence in them. May God allow us to be open to more difficult conversations and hard work as we seek to achieve peace and unity. While those goals are challenging, it is not impossible to attain them.

I pray that the Holy Spirit stirs up a desire in our hearts to look for solutions to the problems we encounter. May God watch over us and strengthen our resolve to ensure that our nation remains indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

+Nelson J. Pérez
Archbishop of Philadelphia