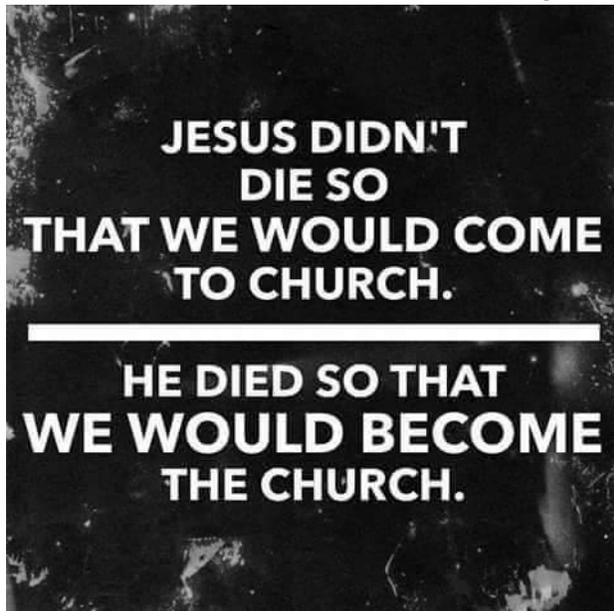


**FATHER ANTON'S WORDS OF WISDOM:** In light of the events of late, I thought to republish this column



would be very appropriate... The racism, prejudice and hatred so rampant has no room in the life of a Christian or in the Church! Every time I hear of such hatred and violence my heart aches for humanity, for we are broken indeed. Such hatred and bigotry does not reflect anything at all about God – it is an abomination of His teachings. Throughout the scriptures Jesus reminds us of what it means to be a Child of God. He teaches us in a language of love, not hate, language of compassion, not intolerance, a language of humility and not self-righteousness. It is not just in the Muslim world that we see this fanaticism, we see also in Christianity and all other religions where people think they have the right to point the finger and condemn, or a sense of superiority. They spew hatred from their lips; incite

division and violence all in the name of God. When I am out and about, I often hear the racial slurs and prejudice of others, people against immigration – folks who are fleeing for their very lives seeking that same thing that you and I enjoy – freedom and safety. I hear complaints how we have our own homeless to feed, when prior to immigration no one seemed to care about them. Excuse after excuse as to why we should not reach out and help our fellow human beings. God created us all equal, Paul tells us “In Christ there is no male nor female, no slave nor freeman, no Jew nor Gentile, but all are a new creation.” The Gospel is full of reminders that we are not to judge others; it reminds us to “be compassionate as Your Father is compassionate,” to “love one another, as I have loved you...” “Whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, that you do unto Me.” I pray for these victims and their families, and all victims of prejudice, bigotry, violence, hatred and oppression. I pray for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, and for all our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are told that their lives have no value... that they are less than human. I pray that hearts of stone can be turned into hearts of flesh. That all realize that love is the glue that holds together the human family. My late grandmother sang with me as a child an old hymn “Jesus, love me” and in it we sang “red and yellow, black and white, all are precious in His sight...” so simple, yet so hard for many to take to heart. I was fortunate to live in a small town that was full of immigrants from many different countries and who got along. As a child I didn’t pay attention to skin colour or what religion my friends were... they were simply my friends and I accepted them for who they were. We need to get a handle on the violence in Canada and in the USA. Far too many lives taken through gun violence, oppression, poverty and prejudice, and there is not one reasonable reason for any private citizen to own assault rifles or machine guns. When Christ was on the cross in His human BROKENNESS He united the BROKENNESS of humanity with His – His life, death and resurrection raised us to a higher dignity and all this human pettiness we see today. It is time we got back to basics and learn to live with one another in peace. Not everyone needs to be your friend, and you don’t have to agree with everyone’s opinion of lifestyle, but we all have to accept and respect one another as brothers and sisters. Pope Francis has reminded us that God is Mercy and Compassion. Churches are not courtrooms where judgements are made, but rather hospitals for the sick, who in their brokenness come to seek solace and

acceptance. All of us have weaknesses and all of us struggle day to day with life. It's time we did more to show the solidarity of the human race.

LET US PRAY: MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE. WHERE THERE IS HATRED LET ME BRING YOUR LOVE. WHERE THERE IS INJURY, YOUR PARDON, LORD. AND WHERE THERE'S DOUBT, TRUE FAITH IN YOU. MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE. WHERE THERE'S DESPAIR IN LIFE LET ME BRING HOPE. WHERE THERE IS DARKNESS ONLY LIGHT, AND WHERE THERE'S SADNESS EVER JOY. GRANT THAT I MAY NEVER SEEK, TO BE CONSOLED AS TO CONSOLE, TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS TO UNDERSTAND, TO BE LOVED AS TO LOVE WITH ALL MY SOUL. FOR IT IS PARDONING THAT WE ARE PARDONED, IN GIVING THAT WE RECEIVE, AND IN DYING THAT WE ARE BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE. AMEN.