O God of the whole human family,
Hear our prayer!
You in whose image we each are made,
Hear our cry!

Once again,
the horrible fragmentation of our country is laid bare
in the distressing events that have taken place
in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Violent expressions of bigotry splinter us again
as a machine extends the reach of the human fist in lashing out.
The idolatrous sin of white supremacy
has snuffed another life, gravely injured others
and stunned us who witness another chapter of
our nation’s oldest wounds unfolding.

Keep us from the temptation to be deaf and numb to this reality:
Hate is organizing in groups across the land,
seeking support and justification and strength.
O God, let us not add to its force by our silence or our fear!
Make us as bold in justice grounded in grace
as others are bold in perpetuating the ancient lie.

There is no healing
until the great sin is honestly named among us.
There is no forgiveness
until we admit our complicity in acts and systems of oppression.

Lead us all to liberation, O God of the Exodus.
Help us each with the hard truths of our prejudice and deep-seated angers.
For no nation is great that harbors and sustains its shadows
and claims them as virtue.
No people is blessed who hides behind a flag
while uttering slander and propagating hate.
Grant us courage to act in the moment that is always
NOW.
We pray to You. Do not turn away. AMEN.

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.
August 15th, 2017