

# GLOBAL CIRCLE FOR REPARATIONS AND HEALING

## PRESENTMENT TO THE HOLY SEE

### Executive Summary

We, the undersigned representatives of the Global Circle of Reparations and Healing, deliver this Presentment to the Roman Catholic Church on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of July 2022, in Vatican City.

We, children of Africa, come respectfully before the Holy See in the quest for full accountability. We come for reparations and healing for sinful actions ordered, blessed, condoned, and promoted by the Roman Catholic Church that have paved the way for the oppression of Black people in Africa and across the Diaspora from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the present moment.

We describe briefly the Church's leading role in what has become known as the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and its horrendous aftermath, and the Church's moral and legal obligation of redress.

### HARMS

- 1. The historical record affirms that the Roman Catholic Church declared and sanctioned the destruction of African kingdoms, the plunder of African wealth and resources, total war on African people, and the perpetual enslavement of Africans and their descendants.**

Beginning in the 1400s, a series of Papal Bulls declaring total war on Africa, endorsed and supported the Transatlantic trafficking and perpetual enslavement of African men, women, and children – equaling today what constitutes both war crimes and crimes against humanity. One example is the Bull *Dum Diversas*, issued in 1452 by Pope Nicholas V.

*“We grant to you by these present documents **with our Apostolic authority**, full and free permission **to invade, search out, capture and subjugate** the Saracens and pagans and any other unbelievers and enemies of Christ wherever they may be, as well as their kingdoms, duchies, counties, principalities, lands, towns, villas and other properties... **and to reduce their persons into perpetual slavery. And appropriate all their kingdoms, commands, retainers, dominance, and other possessions, lands, towns, villas, and any possessions to yourself and to your successors on the throne of Portugal in perpetuity. By reason of our Apostolic authority, we allow you and your successors to use and enjoy these assets fully and freely.**”*

- 2. The historical record affirms that the Roman Catholic Church contributed to the creation of a racial hierarchy of humanity by endorsing the lie of White superiority and Black inferiority.**

In allowing an anti-Black interpretation of the Curse of Ham, the Church marked the continent of Africa and its people as inferior and perpetuated the lie of White superiority and Black inferiority. That lie was used to justify the Transatlantic trafficking and enslavement of African human beings, the colonization of Africa, and the continued devaluing of Black lives and the underdevelopment of Black communities in Africa and across the Diaspora today.

### LEGACY

**The Roman Catholic Church's actions contributed to the creation of a global racial animus that has placed Africans and people of African ancestry at the bottom rung of humanity.**

For more than six centuries, the theft of labor of the people of African lineage and heritage on both sides of the Atlantic, and the nearly incalculable wealth that it produced, has redistributed income and wealth to generations of people of European lineage and heritage.

“These were for Black Africa, not only lost centuries but also centuries of organized international condemnation and murder of millions of her innocent and defenseless sons and daughters, years of political crisis, economic setbacks, social unrest, and developmental stagnation **in all its ramifications**... Four hundred years of European, Christian cruelty of papally and theologically sanctioned inhumanity that afflicted on Africa a loss in men, in happiness, freedom and dignity.”<sup>i</sup>

This has left a stark dichotomy of privilege and poverty between European and African nations.

<i>Human Development Index (HDI) Category</i>	<i>African Nations*</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>European Nations</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<b>Very High Human Development</b>	-	0%	<b>50</b>	86%
<b>High Human Development</b>	<b>3**</b>	7%	<b>6</b>	10%
<b>Medium Human Development</b>	<b>11</b>	24%	<b>2</b>	3%
<b>Low Human Development</b>	<b>32</b>	69%	-	0%

\*Sub-Saharan

\*\*Botswana, South Africa and Gabon

### REPARATIONS

**Encouraged by the words and spirit of the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, in which Pope Francis calls for a deepened sense of our shared humanity and compelled by international law, customs, and norms regarding total war, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, we seek *full* reparations and healing for people of African ancestry.**

- A Statement of Full Acknowledgement and Recognition
- An Apology Consistent with International Norms, Customary Law, and Christian Values
- A Commitment to Global Reparatory Justice and Healing Organizations
- The Issuance of Directives to Offending Western Nations to Also Engage in Redress
- The Rescission of Papal Bulls on the Enslavement of Africans and People of African Descent
- The Issuance of an Encyclical On Reparations and Healing for African People
- The Establishment of a Papal Commission to Develop and Fund Reparations Proposals
- A Generous Global Monetary Commitment to Reparations and Healing

With this Presentment, we speak the truth and call for urgent action to assist in the repair and healing of African peoplehood around the world from harms caused by the Roman Catholic Church.

We are the Global Circle of Reparations and Healing.

### SOURCES:

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  2. Grills, Aird, Frierson, “African Psychology and the Global Movement for Freedom from the Lie of Black Inferiority,” [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346907708\\_Alternation\\_271\\_2020\\_170\\_-\\_206170Print\\_ISSN\\_1023-1757\\_Electronic\\_ISSN\\_2519-5476\\_DOI\\_httpsdoiorg10290862519-54762020v27n1a10African\\_Psychology\\_and\\_the\\_Global\\_Movement\\_for\\_Freedom\\_from\\_the\\_Lie\\_of\\_Black\\_I](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346907708_Alternation_271_2020_170_-_206170Print_ISSN_1023-1757_Electronic_ISSN_2519-5476_DOI_httpsdoiorg10290862519-54762020v27n1a10African_Psychology_and_the_Global_Movement_for_Freedom_from_the_Lie_of_Black_I)
  3. McMahon, Thomas, “The Great Commission, Papal Bulls and the Doctrine of Discovery: from the 4th Century to Current Law,” [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3911636](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3911636)
  4. Sweet, James H., “The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought,” <https://www.sas.rochester.edu/gsw/assets/pdf/iberian-roots.pdf>