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Statement by Bishop Joseph R. Kopacz of the
Catholic Diocese of Jackson on the Mississippi State Flag

JACKSON – In solidarity with other faith traditions and business leaders, I, as Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Jackson, call upon our State Leadership in the Legislature and the Governor’s Office to immediately remove the current State Flag of Mississippi and replace it with one that better represents the inhabitants of our State.

The people of Mississippi have elected you to make difficult decisions for the betterment of our State. Now is your time to lead us with justice and compassion.

Our Catholic Church has a long and storied tradition of speaking out against injustices in society and on a unique level in the State of Mississippi for the past 180 years. Today, we continue and honor that legacy by asking our State Leaders to remove a symbol that recalls an unjust and oppressive society and place it in a museum where it belongs.

Let our new flag reflect a new Mississippi where all our people can gaze upon it and feel pride. Let our new flag signal a Mississippi where we can learn from the past and carve a bright future for our young people. Let our new flag encompass a State where justice and peace swell in the hearts of all.

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The Catholic Diocese of Jackson comprises 65 counties in the State of Mississippi covering Woodville to Iuka, Southaven to Paulding, Vicksburg to Meridian.