

- USCCB & WOMEN RELIGIOUS RESPONSE TO SHOOTINGS
- PRAYER FOR PEACE
- WHITE FRAGILITY WORKSHOP

SALT & LIGHT

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BISHOPS' RESPONSE TO GUN VIOLENCE

From Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, President of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Bishop Frank J. Dewane, Chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development

"We extend our condolences to the families and friends of those murdered in Dayton last night. The lives lost this weekend confront us with a terrible truth. **We can never again believe that mass shootings are an isolated exception. They are an epidemic against life that we must, in justice, face.** God's mercy and wisdom compel us to move toward preventative action. We encourage all Catholics to increased prayer and sacrifice for healing and the end of these shootings. We encourage Catholics to pray and raise their voices for needed changes to our national policy and national culture as well. We call on all relevant committees of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to outline a reinvigorated policy agenda and pastoral campaign to address ways we can help fight this social disease that has infected our nation. The Conference has long advocated for responsible gun laws and increased resources for addressing the root causes of violence. We also call upon the President and Congress to set aside political interests and find ways to better protect innocent life."

PAST USCCB STATEMENTS ON GUNS

The US Bishops have a long history raising gun violence as an important life issue. They have often voiced their support for gun legislation, not only to the faithful, but to Congress itself. Over 6 years ago they wrote to the Senate Judiciary Committee saying that:

"The Church has been a consistent voice for the promotion of peace at home and around the world and a strong advocate for the reasonable regulation of firearms. **Simply put, guns are too easily accessible.**"

"**We have an obligation to respond.** Violence - in our homes, our schools and streets, our nation and world - is destroying the lives, dignity and hopes of millions of our sisters and brothers."

"**We support measures that control the sale and use of firearms and make them safer...**and we reiterate our call for sensible regulation of handguns."



Our Lady of Guadalupe

By Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS

Dedicated as a prayerful reminder of the people of El Paso & Dayton. Feel free to share, but do your kind little bit to end racial hatred and violence.

The USCCB joined "46 other national religious leaders in signing the letter of *Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence*. The letter urges Congress to support policies that:

- Require universal background checks for all gun purchases;
- Limit civilian access to high-capacity weapons and ammunition magazines;
- Make gun trafficking a federal crime, and;
- Improve access to mental health care for those who may be prone to violence.

Sadly, 6 years later, Catholic groups are still calling for the same legislation along with new calls to:

- allow federal funding for gun research
- preventing hate crime and domestic violence offenders from having access to guns.

WOMEN RELIGIOUS' RESPONSE

The recent mass shootings in our country impel us to once again beg all citizens and all elected leaders to end the rampant rage and division that have overpowered the nation and too often result in mass, indiscriminate violence. We are a nation that promises a life free from fear, and yet we seem unable to stop the epidemic of hate that has overwhelmed us. As we have been carrying in our own hearts the pain being endured by families who have lost loved ones and those wounded through gun violence, we bring in as well those impacted by these latest attacks.

What we are witnessing today is being called stochastic terrorism -- the use of mass public communication, usually against a particular individual or group, which incites or inspires acts of terrorism which are statistically probable but happen seemingly at random. The demonization of groups through mass media has been shown to result in violent acts because some who hear this speech interpret it as promoting targeted violence. We insist that society be protected from such acts of terrorism. We are called to confront rhetoric that stokes racism and hatred of anyone perceived to be "different" than we are. We are all responsible for monitoring our own language and actions and calling attention when the language and actions of others cross the line.

We implore all legislative bodies to pass legislation that effectively prevents gun violence. We call for the passage of laws that ban assault weapons, require universal background checks for all gun sales, provide funding for gun violence prevention research, and makes the trafficking in weapons a federal crime.

While mass shootings capture our attention, we cannot forget that they are only part of the pervasive violence perpetrated by use of firearms. Most major cities see shooting deaths regularly, and suicides, domestic violence, and accidents caused by guns are pervasive in all parts of the country. According to the Gun Violence Archives, so far this year more than 8,734 people were shot to death and more than 17,300 people were injured in more than 33,000 incidents. Those numbers do not include firearm suicides. While the horror of mass shootings captures our attention, gun violence persists day after day and its massive scale goes unnoticed.

The deeper causes of violence must be addressed by us as a nation, and we must put our resources there immediately. Only by focusing on the multi-

layered foundations of violence will we succeed in making our nation a safer and less fearful place for all. As the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), we pledge our support to end the scourge of rage and hatred that has gripped our nation and we will be unfailing in our efforts to call for legislation that works to end gun violence quickly and effectively.

LCWR is an association of leaders of congregations of Catholic sisters that has nearly 1350 members, who represent more than 44,000 women religious in the US.

PRAYER: LET THE SHOOTING END

By the Sisters of Mercy

God, our hearts are broken with pain at the senseless deaths caused by gun violence. Families mourn, children live in fear, and some in our nation respond by arming themselves with more guns with greater capacity to end life. Our disconnection and alienation has caused some to turn to guns for protection and safety. We ask that you touch our hearts with your love, heal our brokenness, and turn us away from violence toward peace. Help us to transform our own hearts and to seek peaceful ways of resolving our differences. Let our hands reach out and connect with those who feel alone, those who live in fear, and those suffering from mental illness. Let our voices be raised asking our legislators to enact gun laws to protect all in our society, especially those most vulnerable. Let our pens write messages demanding change while also scripting words of hope and transformation. We ask this in the name of the God who desires that we live together in peace. Amen

WHITE FRAGILITY WORKSHOP

The book *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo has been on the lists and lips of readers all over the country. DiAngelo coined the phrase "white fragility" to describe many white people's insistence that conversations about race be comfortable and non-threatening before they're able to fully participate.

Some don't understand the idea at all. Others read the book and report they're just left with an ambivalent feeling of helplessness about their role in the future of race relations.

African American writer Nanette D. Massey of Buffalo believes we are way beyond holding hands when it comes to talking about race and the timing of this book couldn't be better. Massey will present her take on its ideas in very practical terms. The goal is to leave audiences, black and white, with self-clarity and the ability to participate in conversations within their own personal spheres of influence with genuine confidence, humor, and humility. Cost: \$10

Sunday, Aug. 18th 2:30-6pm

31 Prince St. Rochester, NY 14607

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