

BISHOPS UNITED AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

November 8, 2018

We mourn the murder of 12 precious children of God today in Thousand Oaks, California, and we weep for those who have lost people who were dear to them. We offer our prayers for solace, for healing and for a change of heart among the elected leaders whose unwillingness to enact safe gun legislation puts us all at risk.

Much of what can be said in the wake of such appalling carnage has been said. It was said after the mass shooting at the Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin; and it was said after the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut, the two devastating events that brought Bishops United Against Gun Violence into being. And it was said most recently after the anti-Semitic massacre at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, just 12 days ago. Mass shootings occur so frequently in our country that there are people who have survived more than one.

While the phrase “thoughts and prayers” might have become devalued by elected leaders who believe speaking these words discharges their duty in the wake of a massacre, we nonetheless believe that we are called to pray for the dead, those who mourn them and those who respond to the scene of mass shootings. We, thus, offer the following “Litany in the Wake of a Mass Shooting,” to commemorate the dead, to comfort their loved ones, and to honor survivors and first responders. And we do so with the reminder that one does not pray in lieu of summoning political courage, but in preparation for doing so. We invite you to join us in this litany and our commitment to take action so that our country can be freed from the epidemic of gun violence.

Litany in the Wake of a Mass Shooting

God of peace, we remember all those who have died in incidents of mass gun violence in this nation's public and private spaces.

Six dead at the Wisconsin Sikh Temple.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Twelve dead at an Aurora, Colorado movie theater.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Twenty-eight dead at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Six dead at Santa Monica College, California.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Seven dead at a Hialeah, Florida apartment complex.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Thirteen dead at the Washington Navy Yard.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at Fort Hood, Texas.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Seven dead in Isla Vista, near UC Santa Barbara.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at Marysville Pilchuck High School in Washington.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Six dead in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Nine dead at Emanuel AME in Charleston, South Carolina.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Sixteen dead at a San Bernardino, California office.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Ten dead at Umpqua Community College, Oregon.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Six dead in Kalamazoo, Michigan.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at a Hesston, Kansas office.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at a Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania backyard party.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Fifty dead at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at Cascade Mall in Burlington, Washington.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at Fort Lauderdale Airport.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead in Fresno, California.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Eight dead in Lincoln County, Mississippi.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at an Eaton Township, Pennsylvania supermarket.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Nine dead at a Plano, Texas football-watching party.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Fifty-nine dead at a Las Vegas, Nevada concert.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Twenty-seven dead at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Seventeen dead at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at the Veterans Home in Yountville, California.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at a Nashville, Tennessee Waffle House.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Ten dead at Santa Fe High School, Texas.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at the Capital Gazette Newspaper in Annapolis, Maryland.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at the Fifth Third Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at a Rite Aid distribution center in Aberdeen, Maryland.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Eleven dead at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Thirteen dead at a bar in Thousand Oaks, California.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

All those who have died in any incident of gun violence.
Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

For survivors of gun violence.
Grant them comfort and healing.
Hear us, Lord.

For those who have lost loved ones to gun violence.
Grant them peace.
Hear us, Lord.

For those first responders who care for victims of gun violence.
Protect and strengthen them.
Hear us, Lord.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.