

Office of the Archbishop  
320 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
June 7, 2022

Dear Archbishop Lori,

Thank you for your recent statement regarding the death of the children in Texas. We are appalled, angry, and dispirited by the recent mass shootings in Buffalo and Texas (and now Oklahoma) as well as the ongoing violence on the streets of Baltimore where more than 338 people were murdered in 2021 alone. We know that like us you are deeply grieved by the suffering of the victims' families and of all those affected by gun violence in our country.

We are writing to express our concerns and suggest a few ways in which you could exercise your leadership in this matter. As Archbishop of Baltimore your voice counts.

In addition to the prayers you have asked us to offer, we request you do the following:

- **Send the statement on the Archdiocesan website directly** to each member of the Archdiocese, just as you have done for other issues of grave significance. This will signal the importance you place on combatting gun violence.
- Invite everyone in the Archdiocese to **ask their national legislators to enact legislation** that would ban assault weapons from everyday use and require rigorous background checks for anyone purchasing a deadly weapon.
- Request government organizations to **increase mental health services** and support, particularly for our young people who are struggling.
- Urge Catholics in the Archdiocese, as a moral imperative, to **speak out strongly in opposition to any 'hate'** speech that targets or denigrates others who are different than themselves.
- **Establish a task force** to collaborate with authorities in the City of Baltimore and neighborhood organizations to find solutions to the ongoing violence

We pray that you feel passionate enough about this issue to go beyond words that have been spoken so often that they are no longer heard to demands for action from us, our legislators, and our local leaders.

We are here to support you however we can, whether by sending letters, helping to create a task force, rallying in Washington, D.C, or calling our legislators. Although Maryland has worked in recent years to strengthen gun laws, the effects are undermined by the lax laws in other states. What are the next steps that we are called to do together? We are counting on your leadership to make **something** happen.

Sincerely,

Members of St. John the Evangelist Social Justice Ministry Committee, Columbia, Maryland

Chair, Kathleen Marucci

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