

## From the Bishop

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### For Christ's Sake

September 24, 2025

Aloha my dear Siblings in Christ Jesus,

In my years as Bishop, I have had to write way too many times about school shootings and gun violence in the United States. As of yesterday, there have been at least 57 shootings at K-12 schools, according to [Everytown for Gun Safety](#). This, of course, includes August's terrible attack at Annunciation Catholic School in Minnesota that left two children dead.

With the murder of the State legislator and her husband in Minnesota and of political commentator Charlie Kirk, we now face the specter of political violence. Studies from the [University of Maryland](#) and [Princeton University](#) highlight the rise of civil unrest, threats against government officials and facilities, and political violence. A 2024 [Center for Strategic and International Studies](#) (CSIS) report notes that the number of domestic terrorist attacks and plots against government targets in the last five years has nearly tripled over the last 25 years combined. These plots and attacks come from across the political spectrum, driven by no single political party, ideology, or movement, but can create a dangerous cycle of violence.

While many are calling for the reduction of language of division and hate, it must begin with each of us. We – even in the privacy of our homes – must refrain from terms that degrade others – even those with whom we most disagree. This includes terms like “communist” and “fascist” that consciously awakens memories of violent struggles in the 20th century. One plants the seed of armed struggle when such terms are used about someone with whom we vehemently disagree. It is too easy in the minds of the immature and the mentally unstable to take such rhetoric as permission to use violence. We must reject the false “us” versus “them” dichotomy. We are all children of God – even those whom we count as enemy in our brokenness today.

We also must reject the use of language that dehumanizes others and labels others. When someone – especially a fellow Christian – uses such language, we should call them out. There is no place in Christians' vocabulary for terms and phrases like “animals,” “aliens,” “low intelligence,” and “people with bad genes.”

Finally, I urge everyone to limit time on social media. We need to seek different perspectives. We need to confuse the algorithms. We need to read more and seek out in-depth analyses and not just quick podcasts or the talking heads on cable news networks.

As Christians, our goal is to be in right relationship with God, other human beings and creation. Human fulfillment is found in achieving one's natural purpose through virtuous action, ultimately leading to union with God, the highest good, and final end of all existence. It must be grounded in our words and actions in daily life.

Peter Maurin (1877-1949) was a French Roman Catholic social activist and De Lalle Brother. He founded the Catholic Worker Movement with Dorothy Day in 1933. They also founded a newspaper (still being published) called "The Catholic Worker." In it, Maurin would share short theological grounded "Easy Essays." These "Easy Essays" are reprinted in current issues. In a recent edition, I read the following:

#### THE FIRST CHRISTIANS

The first Christians, were real Christians,  
they died for their faith.  
Before dying for their faith, the first Christians  
fed the hungry for Christ's sake,  
clothed the naked for Christ's sake,  
sheltered the homeless for Christ's sake,  
instructed the ignorant for Christ's sake.  
And because they did all those things for Christ's sake,  
their pagan contemporaries said about them:  
"See how they love each other."  
The first Christians  
did everything for Christ's sake  
and nothing for business' sake.

If we – the followers of Jesus Christ – are not speaking words of fellowship, righteousness, and love, who will?

So, today, put down your phone and turn off the television. Say a prayer and share a word of grace. It must begin with you and with me.

*Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of the United States, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Aloha ma o Iesu Kristo, ko mākou Haku,

+Bob

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