

Responding to Gun Violence

Conversation 1: Personally

1

Let us pray:

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn from the scabbard of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit that this people may be gathered under the wings of the Prince of Peace; to whom be dominion and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

- adapted from the Prayer For Peace, *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 815

2

James 2: 14, 17-18, 26 (NRSV)

What good is it, my brothers and sisters [and siblings], if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you?

So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.
But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith.

For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

Silent reflection

3

Let us pray:

Almighty God, who created us in your own image: Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and the creation of peace in our time, to the glory of your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

- adapted from the Collect for Social Justice, *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 260

4

Romans 12: 1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters [and siblings], by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Silent reflection

5

Let us pray:

Merciful God, take from us the heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh.

Give us authority to trample scorpions and pick up snakes, but let us prefer your love to our power.

Teach us to forge plowshares instead of pistols, pruning hooks instead of long guns; save us from living and dying by the sword.

Give us such perfect love for our neighbor as casts out prejudice, fear, or contempt.

Suffer the little children to come to you; lift them up and bless them, as you love them.

Forgive those whom we struggle to forgive or to forget. Forgive us our trespasses.

Create in us a new heart, and renew us by your Spirit, we pray in the Name of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

- adapted from the Biblical Litany for Churches Pursuing Peace in *Whom Shall I Fear? Urgent Questions for Christians in an Age of Violence*, Rosalind C Hughes

6

Litany in the Wake of a Mass Shooting

Following the murder of thirteen precious children of God in Thousand Oaks, California in November 2018, Bishops United Against Gun Violence offered a "Litany in the Wake of a Mass Shooting" to commemorate the dead, to comfort their loved ones, and to honor survivors and first responders. Today, the litany has been updated to include yet another mass shooting that took the lives of five precious children of God in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

[They] offer this litany, once again, with the reminder that one does not pray in lieu of summoning political courage, but in preparation for doing so. Bishops United Against Gun Violence invite you to join 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. ...

7

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. ...

Four dead at a bar in Kansas City, Kansas.
Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at a backyard football watch party in Fresno, California
Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Six dead at a cemetery and kosher market in Jersey City, New Jersey.
Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Six dead at the Molson Coors complex in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at a convenience store in Springfield, Missouri.
Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

8

Ten dead at a rail yard in San Jose, California.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead in the northeast side of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Eight dead at three spas in Atlanta, Georgia.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Ten dead at a grocery store in Boulder, Colorado.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Four dead at an office complex in Orange, California.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Six dead at a home in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Nine dead at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Seven dead at a birthday party in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

9

Four dead at Oxford High School in Oxford Township, Michigan.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead in Lakewood and Denver, Colorado.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at The Church in Sacramento, California.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Six dead in downtown Sacramento, California.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Ten dead at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Twenty-two dead at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Five dead at a medical office building in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Give to the departed eternal rest
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

10

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.