

A Time for Prayer

If ever there was a time for prayer, it is now,
especially in the face of the deaths of the innocent
and the escalating epidemic of gun violence in our country.

Raised and united in prayer,
the voices of the Saint Raphael Parish family
can rise like fragrant incense before the Lord as we plead
for an end to the violence that seems to be consuming us.

Please pray with us, in your own words or using the prayers and litany below.

*If you remain in me and my words remain in you,
Ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. (John 15:7)*

Let the Shooting End (from 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 respond by arming themselves with more guns, with greater capacity to end life. Our disconnection and alienation has caused some in our country to turn to guns for protection and safety.

Touch our hearts with your love, we pray. 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 the most vulnerable. Let our pens write messages demanding change and also words of hope and transformation.

We ask this in the name of the loving and merciful God who desires that we live together in peace. *Amen*

Prayer for the Victims of Violence

Loving God, you are the author and sustainer of our lives. You know the anguish of the sorrowful, you are attentive to the prayers of the brokenhearted. Hear your people who cry out to you in their need; strengthen their hope in your lasting goodness.

We pray today for those who have died because of violence, of terrorism, of war. Draw them to yourself; let your face shine upon them. May they be greeted with choirs of angels and experience your eternal peace and joy.

Be near to all those who have been touched by violence: those who have been hurt, lost their loved ones or lost their sense of security. Be for them a steady comfort and safe resting place.

Softens the hearts and steady of the minds of those who would do violence to others. May hate be replaced with love, violence with peace and darkness with your light.

We pray through Christ our LORD. *Amen.*

Litany in the Wake of a Mass Shooting

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

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.

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.