



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, July 28, 2024

Make Us an Instrument of Your Peace

In last week's bulletin, Fr. Grogan asked us to consider what we might do to "bring harmony and peace into a culture increasingly consumed by hostility, division and war." **One powerful action is to pray.**

The Franciscan Action Network offers the following prayer for peace and healing:

God of life, source of hope,
the violence within our world, our communities, our families,
in our very selves is destroying your creation.
Make still the restless spirit within me that is self-seeking.
Stir within my heart a renewed Spirit of reverence, respect, and reconciliation.
Give me strength to break the cycle of violence by realizing that peace begins with me.
God of reconciliation, passionate for your whole creation,
impel us to seek your guiding hand in leading us to forgiveness, pardon, and peace.
Give us the heart that holds a place for all those who oppose us or who call us enemy.
Help us by your grace in the ministry of reconciliation you have given us to do
to heal and make whole.
Let the word of reconciliation be in our mouths and in our hearts,
that your peace might be present to all. Amen.

(Adapted from a prayer by Fr. Angelo Anthony, CPPS)

Another powerful action is to raise our voices against access to weapons of violence.

Recently, [the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on Firearm Violence](#) called firearm violence in America a public health crisis, noting it has created a cycle of trauma and fear that is damaging Americans' mental health. "Since 2020, firearm-related injury has been the leading cause of death for U.S. children and adolescents (ages 1–19), surpassing motor vehicle crashes, cancer, and drug overdose and poisoning. In 2022, 48,204 total people died from firearm-related injuries, including suicides, homicides, and unintentional deaths. This is over 8,000 more lives lost than in 2019 and over 16,000 more lives lost than in 2010." Dr. Murthy worries that "we've accepted this as somehow just normal, as the way things are, but it does not have to be the way things are." (*MedPage Today*, 7/22/24)

Incredibly, grocery stores in Oklahoma, Alabama, and Texas are selling firearm ammunition in vending machines. [Sign the petition to demand grocery store owners immediately remove ammunition vending machines from their premises.](#) (*SSJ Center for Justice*, 7/19/24)

Gun violence is not a partisan issue. It impacts us all. And the overwhelming majority of Americans from all communities and all political beliefs want more action on this issue. California has become the first state to call for a Constitutional convention on the issue. Now mayors from across the country are adding their voice. Be on the lookout for more information on this effort.

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@holycrossphl.org.